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SONGS AND POEMS,

BY THE

REV. JOHN SKINNER,

AUTHOR OF "TULLOCHGORUM."

WITH A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

BY

H. G. REID,

EDITOR OF "PETERHEAD SENTINEL."

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PREFACE.

THE Songs and Poems of the Rev. JOHN SKINNER have been held in high estimation by his countrymen for nearly a century, yet fifty years have elapsed since they were published in a collected form. Even those pieces which have appeared in modern collections are, in general, so altered and mutilated that they almost lose their original beauty. These considerations, combined with the growing taste for genuine Scottish poetry, naturally suggested the present publication. At the request of the Publisher, I have written a Sketch of the Author's Life, and added Notes where explanations seemed necessary and the facts could be ascertained.

Although a large number of Mr SKINNER's Manuscripts were unfortunately destroyed after his death, a few were preserved, and to his relatives—especially

his aged grandson, Mr Robert Cumming, Longside—in whose possession they are, I have been greatly indebted for the facilities of reference and assistance kindly afforded.

From the materials thus placed at my command, and other resources, I have gathered some facts hitherto unpublished, and been enabled to present what, I trust, will be found a correct and comprehensive, though necessarily brief, narrative of the incidents in the life of the venerable poet.

H. G. R.

Peterhead, *April*, 1859.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

The Rev. John Skinner, one of our most popular lyric poets, and a man of great learning, was born on the 3d of October, 1721, at Balfour, in the parish of Birse, one of the wildest and most romantic districts in Aberdeenshire. His father, who had married the widow of Donald Farquharson of Balfour, was then schoolmaster of the parish; but about two years afterwards, he removed to Echt, a small hilly parish within twelve miles of Aberdeen. For upwards of fifty years he faithfully discharged the duties of parochial teacher there. A man of upright character, and no mean attainments, he was much esteemed in the locality, and, it is recorded, prepared more young men for the University than most schoolmasters of his day. Shortly after his new appointment, his wife died, and, having been several years a widower, he married a second time, and had a numerous family, the youngest of whom, James, became a lawyer of some distinction in Edinburgh.

John was the only fruit of the first union. Unlike most men of eminence, he owed little to maternal influence and teaching—

> A mother!—Ah! the venerable name,
> Which my young lips were never taught to frame.

These were the words of the man, and to a devoted father he was indebted for his early training. No time was lost,

and the boy soon gave indication of his peculiar genius. He excelled in acquiring a knowledge of the Latin language, and evinced a taste for poetry at a very early age. Endowed with an excellent memory, and especially fond of poetry in the Scottish dialect, before his twelfth year he could repeat, with evident appreciation, the long poem of "Chryste-Kirk on the Green," attributed to James the First. Some of our best old songs were also stored up in his memory at this early period, and retained, it is said, with youthful freshness, even when he had become the venerable author of Tullochgorum. But study had not been neglected. Having made rapid progress under his father, in 1734, when only thirteen years of age, we find him at the annual competition for bursaries in Marischal College, Aberdeen, and, though the youngest of his year, he was successful in gaining a considerable one—no unimportant matter in these days to the son of a parish schoolmaster with a large family. He attended during the usual term of four sessions in that University, and passed with honour through all the stages of a classical education.

Such was the early history of John Skinner—only yet in his seventeenth year—and it resembles few others. The usual periods in life—childhood, boyhood, manhood—we can scarcely distinguish. Allowed to follow the bent of his mind, the first dawnings of intellect were not those of a child, and the boy of twelve an adept at Latin and an enthusiast in poetry was altogether out of the common course of things, and would even have been deemed remarkable in our own advanced age. In all this, however, we can trace indications of the scholar and the poet.

Like most others in the same station, Mr Skinner commenced life as a teacher. After leaving College, he was

employed in that capacity for a few months in the parish school of Kemnay, near Aberdeen; but in 1739, he removed to Monymusk, having accepted the office of assistant to the schoolmaster there. This parish, situated on the banks of the Don, contained some of the finest plantations in Aberdeenshire, and, with hill and dale, wood and water, presented some beautiful and imposing scenery. Here, it may be said, commenced the history of the poet. Although we are aware that from his earliest youth he delighted in the muse of his country, we have no authentic account of any earlier attempts at composition, unless it be contained in his own words to Burns—"While I was young, I dabbled a good deal in these things." He was now about eighteen years of age, and several pieces of a descriptive character were written about this time. Some of these having come under the notice of the lady of Sir Archibald Grant, Bart., the proprietor of the parish, gained for him the favour of that influential family. Generously received into the mansion, the library, consisting of many thousand well-selected works in every branch of literature, was placed at his command, and every facility afforded for the pursuit of his favourite studies. He had thus an opportunity of improving his mind, and a stimulus to cultivate his rustic muse, for which his distinguished patrons deserve honourable mention.

One of the pieces referred to as having attracted the notice of Lady Grant was a "Poem on a Visit to Paradise," which has unfortunately been lost, but is said to have described, in familiar terms, a beautiful little pleasure ground which Sir Archibald had laid out on the banks of the Don. Another was the "Monymusk Christmas Ba'ing," which, being the earliest and longest of Skinner's poems we possess, has been placed first in the present

collection. It was suggested by the celebrated poem of Chryste-Kirk on the Green, the favourite of his youth, and of which, retaining his early predilection, he gave an elegant translation into Latin verse after he had passed his fiftieth year. The poem of the Scottish Monarch has produced many imitations—Allan Ramsay added two cantos—and the humble effort of the Monymusk dominie, taken altogether, will bear comparison with any of them. The poem is descriptive of a Christmas sport, common at the time, and still practised in some rural districts. The scene was the kirkyard of the parish, and the actors, whose characteristics are hit off in a few lines with so much humour and effect, were chiefly young men in the neighbourhood who had taken part in the amusement. The author himself is introduced as the "insett dominie —just riftin frae his dinner," and some of the humorous touches are indeed inimitable, as, for instance, after the day's sport was over, and all had "consented to be friens"—

> At evening syne the fallows keen
> Drank till the neist day's dawing,
> Sae snell, that some tint baith their een,
> And could na pay their lawing
> Till the neist day.

Altogether, this poem, so full of unaffected pleasantry, forms a very complete and graphic description of the old rural sport of Christmas Ba'ing.

Mr Skinner had been brought up a Presbyterian ; but, while at Monymusk, and in frequent and familiar intercourse with an Episcopal clergyman there, he saw reason to change his views, and at once connected himself with the Scottish Episcopal Communion. Although this step may have disappointed his father and others who naturally looked forward to his becoming an ornament in

the Presbyterian Establishment, casting his lot with a small, despised, and persecuted people evinced the depth and sincerity of his convictions, and, as it has been expressed, the only sentiment which remained for the father to cherish was a fervent wish that the son might show himself sincere in his new profession, and do credit to the principles he had adopted. That he did so, his life will abundantly testify.

In the month of June, 1740, Mr Skinner accepted an invitation to become tutor to the only son of a gentleman in Shetland, Mr Sinclair of Scalloway. Here he remained till the death of his pupil's father, about a year afterwards, when the arrangements of the family rendered his services unnecessary, and he left with the sincere regret of all concerned. But the young man had gained other friends, with whom he was soon to form a nearer connection. Having enjoyed the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr Hunter, the only non-juring clergyman in the remote islands of Shetland, he had frequently been a visitor in the house of this pious and devoted man. A deep attachment had sprung up between him and Mr Hunter's family, and before leaving the district, he had won the affections of Grace, the minister's eldest daughter, and received in marriage the hand of her who, indeed a helpmate in many an hour of trial and affliction, was the companion of his joys and sorrows for the long period of fifty-eight years.

Returning to Aberdeenshire, in the summer of 1741, Mr Skinner completed his studies for the ministry, and was ordained a Presbyter of the Episcopal Church by Bishop Dunbar at Peterhead. A vacancy having occurred in the congregation at Longside, he accepted an unanimous invitation to become their pastor, and in November, 1742, when only twenty-one years of age, he entered upon his new and important charge.

Up to this time, Mr Skinner's life had been one of uninterrupted progress and unalloyed happiness; but it was not long to remain so. The church with which he had allied himself was soon to pass through a period of great oppression and suffering, in which he was destined to have his full share. The last effort of the Stuarts, in 1745-6, to regain their lost power had failed, and hard indeed was the lot of all who were deemed their friends. The adventurous band, under Prince Charlie, had been completely routed on the field of Culloden, and their brave-hearted leader, after wandering a fugitive among the woods and glens, forced to seek refuge in a foreign land. The scattered few were pursued by the victorious army with relentless cruelty, and the country became one scene of devastation. The Episcopalians, being in general Jacobites, were subjected to the most barbarous treatment, and the clergy became special objects of resentment. Their houses were plundered, their chapels destroyed, and their very lives endangered by the bands of lawless and ruthless soldiers sent through the country. Among others, Mr Skinner suffered in this vindictive persecution. For some time a prisoner, either in custody or on parole, he had often to leave his house and resort to stratagems lest he should fall into the hands of the soldiers. On one occasion, he attired himself in the garb of a miller, and thus escaped observation; and another most remarkable instance of the lawless severity of the times has been recorded. Mr Skinner was visiting at some distance one day, and on coming home in the evening, found his house in the possession of a military party—some of them guarding the door with fixed bayonets, and others searching the several apartments, even the bed-chamber where Mrs Skinner was lying-in of her fifth child. The house was pillaged by these unfeeling visitors of everything they

could carry with them, hardly leaving a change of linen to father, mother, or child. The little chapel, with all its furniture, was burned, and a lady of some rank is said to have manifested her zeal by riding in triumph round the blazing pile, repeating, with great zest, to the infuriated band—"Hold in the Prayer Books"! But Mr Skinner remained stedfast to his principles, and manifested his anxiety to maintain them by publishing, in 1746, a small tract, entitled a "Preservative against Presbytery"—the first of his literary productions.

About this time the severest restrictions were placed by Government on the Episcopal clergy. In 1746, an act was passed which prevented them from officiating to more than four persons, besides the members of the household, and in 1748, even that small privilege was taken from them, and it was rendered illegal to "exercise the function of a chaplain in any family." The penalties for infringement of these abominable enactments, which had no parallel since the days of the Reformation, were, for the first offence, six months' imprisonment, and, for the second, banishment out of Britain, either for a period of years, or for life.

Under such rigorous restrictions, the utmost caution was necessary; but Mr Skinner continued to visit among his people with untiring devotion, and the oppression only seemed to strengthen their attachment to him. Often, too, the congregation assembled at his lowly cottage, standing outside the house, in winter as well as summer, while he spoke to them from the window or the open door. It was on one of these occasions that the incident occurred which determined his preaching extempore. He had just commenced his sermon, when a hen which had got into one of the apartments cackled, and, means being used to get rid of her, the noisy visitor took flight, scattering in

every direction the unstitched pages that lay before the preacher. An effort was made to collect them, but without success. "Never mind them," said Mr Skinner, "a fowl shall not shut my mouth again"; and, true to his vow, he never used a manuscript afterwards. Thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures, and a firm, fluent speaker, though, no doubt, annoying at the time, there was little cause to regret this amusing and somewhat ludicrous occurrence.

Quietly and inoffensively Mr Skinner continued to discharge his duties as best he could, till several years afterwards, when he was most unexpectedly apprehended on a warrant from the Sheriff-Substitute of Aberdeenshire, and committed to prison. He at once acknowledged before the Sheriff having been in the way of officiating as a clergyman to more than four persons, besides his own family, and was accordingly sentenced to six months' imprisonment, which commenced on the 26th of May, 1753, terminating on the same day in November.

This outrageous act—for in no other light can we look upon it—naturally awakened the darkest fears in his family, and the deepest sorrow and indignation in his congregation. These feelings were shared in by many others, and no wonder. Mr Skinner had six children depending on him for their maintenance, and hard, indeed, must it have been to see a beloved father carried from their bosom like a common felon, it might be, to share the felon's doom. Keenly, too, although resigned to his lot, did the worthy man feel it, when thus cruelly severed from all he loved. The elder children showed the utmost anxiety, and one of them—the second son, who became Bishop of Aberdeen—was so affected that, his biographer tells us, he would have pined to death had not his father been permitted to receive him as his companion

and bed-fellow in prison. To one of these sad incidents in his life Mr Skinner thus adverts in the beautiful Epistle to a Daughter, now published for the first time—

> Ere yet three suns had warm'd thy tender form,
> Ere yet thy mother had got o'er her storm,
> A band of armed ruffians round the bed
> Where child and mother were together laid;
> Thy father seized in silent hour of night,
> Thy mother trembling, and half kill'd with fright;
> And thou, sweet babe, with many a whimpering cry,
> Uncared for and neglected, forced to lie.

But those who had been left so helpless when their guardian was taken from them were not forgotten. By generous and sympathising friends they were well provided for, until the expiry of his term of imprisonment, and welcome restoration to his family and his flock. A gradual change having taken place in public sentiment, more liberal laws were introduced, and in his humble sphere the good man struggled on, without a wish to change, till he had reached the venerable age of eighty-six.

Though humble his position and few his privileges, Mr Skinner attained great eminence as a scholar and theologian. Besides various publications of a controversial nature, he assisted Dr Gleig of Stirling, who had then the management of the Encyclopædia Britannica, in preparing several articles for that work; and in 1788, appeared in two volumes, his "Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, from the First Appearance of Christianity in the Kingdom to the Present Time." In 1809, his posthumous works were published in three volumes, with a memoir by his son, the Bishop of Aberdeen, which embraces many valuable letters, and gives a very interesting and elaborate account of the progress of his studies, and the part he took in the religious controversies

of the time. On these we cannot enter; as a poet and a man Mr Skinner is now chiefly remembered, and as such it is our object to represent him.

With the growing responsibilities of a household, and placed in so straitened circumstances—literally passing rich on forty pounds a-year—Mr Skinner thought of bettering his position by farming. Accordingly, as nearly as can be ascertained, about 1758, he entered Mains of Ludquharn, a farm in the vicinity of Longside, which then formed part of the estate of the Earl of Erroll. But, devoted as he was to the duties of his profession, and otherwise ill adapted for the work, this speculation proved signally unsuccessful. After a hard struggle of nearly seven years, the farm was given up in disgust. In the "Letter to a Friend" on this occasion, one of the most humorous of his poetical effusions, he has given us a very minute account of his sufferings, and certainly they form abundant reasons for his resolution—

> Another course to try—
> Sell corn and cattle off; pay every man;
> Get free of debt and duns as fast's I can;
> Give up the farm, with all its wants; and then,
> Why, even take me to the book and pen,—
> The fittest trade, I find, for clergymen.

On the subject of agricultural improvement, Mr Skinner held very peculiar opinions. He saw, or thought he saw as his son very cautiously tells us, that innovations in husbandry would lead the farmer into temptations, to which hitherto, in his pristine state of rural simplicity, when to plough, to sow, and to reap were all his care, he had been a perfect stranger. Nay, such was his prejudice against the landlord binding his tenant to a fixed rotation of crop that the introduction of the subject never failed to offend him. "What!" he would say, "has the boasted

freedom of our land really come to this, that the man who cultivates it is to become a slave, nay, the only slave to be found in our country? For, transfer a negro to the happy soil of Britain, and the law pronounces him free." As another illustration of this peculiarity—after all, not so remarkable, considering the age in which he lived—we may quote a few lines from an unpublished address which he puts into the mouth of a humble swain bidding farewell to his native parish:—

> No need for bringing sage instructors north
> From Nature's rich domains beyond the Forth
> To teach thy farmers here, or spur them on
> To what they find, or should, or can be done;
> These in-brought helps would soon thy fields engross,
> And draw their profits from thy people's loss.
> Would, for their own behoof, shut many a door,
> Drive out the wealthies, and enslave the poor;
> Let but thy own have time—they have the skill—
> And family regard will spur the will.

Notwithstanding this, agricultural improvements—to the advantages of which he was not altogether blind—often formed the subject of conversation with the farmers in the neighbourhood, who were frequent visitors at his dwelling. The rural population were then extremely ignorant, and many an amusing instance of this came under the notice of the learned and worthy pastor. One may be here related. A good honest farmer had been spending an hour with Mr Skinner on one occasion, when the conversation happened to turn on the subject of the motion of the earth. The farmer would not be convinced that the earth moved at all. "The earth," he maintained, "never gaes oot o' the pairt, and it maun be that the sun gaes roun', for we a' ken that he rises in the east and sets i' the west;" and then, to silence his opponent, he put the following question:—"If the sun didna gae roun' the

earth, fu is it said in the Scriptures, that the Lord commanded the sun to stand still?" "Ay," responded Mr Skinner, in his own quiet way, "it's very true that the sun was commanded to *stand still*, and there he stands *still*, for he never was commanded to take the road again." As to the character of the people, however, he bears the following testimony in the poem to which we have referred :—

> Cheerful, brisk, and keen,
> In spirit lively, in apparel clean,
> With proper feelings, and sufficient spring,
> Good faithful subjects of their God and King.

But there were other visitors and other themes of conversation at Linshart. The lowly cottage, with its but-and-ben, was, in its day, a centre of attraction to young as well as old. Many a bright happy company met within its walls, presenting a pleasant contrast to the general austerity of the times; people could be "cheerful, brisk, and keen," even in those days, at Linshart. Mr Skinner had a rich fund of wit, a fluency in conversation, and a faculty of producing a laugh by grotesque combinations, especially in controversy, which made his company very fascinating. Perhaps, too, there were other attractions at the parsonage, for the daughters were growing up, and had all the pleasant art of "modulating the voice to melody." Be this as it may, the youth of the neighbourhood often met at the cottage to spend the evening, and the "old man," who delighted in mingling with such, had always some amusing story or appropriate song with which to entertain them. It was under these inspiring influences that most of his songs were composed, and in some of them, as the Old Man's Song, and the admirable allegory of Lizzy Liberty, we can easily trace the inspiration. When the daughters had any favourite tune without words, he was applied to, and would gratify their

wishes—perhaps leaning backward in his chair, and without the slightest effort—while they gathered round him and eagerly committed the lines to memory; and when any love adventure came to light, he seldom failed to make it the theme of some appropriate song or epistle, which he would relate, to the infinite delight of the youthful listeners, who were never satisfied till it also was learned. Thus produced and treasured up, the songs passed from one to another, and, long before their publication, some of them had become popular in many parts of Scotland.

In "The Old Man's Song," we have a sketch from real life—a genuine fireside picture—and delightful indeed it must have been to see the worthy sire with his "old wife sitting by," and children and grandchildren around him. Here, too, he used to show the readiness and versatility of his poetic faculty. Possessing a singular power of adapting himself to the humble capacities of the "young folks," as the Bishop, who himself had formed one of the happy circle, tells us, he would make them verses by the hour, and try to call forth the latent spark of genius by proposing questions which, though simple in themselves, were so arranged and expressed as to convey the idea of extreme difficulty. A little occurrence, on one occasion of this kind, is worthy of being preserved. His eldest grandson having failed to discover the little artifice employed to perplex him, was not a little alarmed by hearing his grandfather say that even Thomas the Rhymer had prophesied on the subject of the *fourth* John Skinner's lamentable weakness of mind and want of capacity:—

> The world shall *four* JOHN SKINNERS see,
> The *first* shall teach a school;
> The other *two* shall parsons be,
> And the *fourth* shall be a fool!

The prophet, however, was wrong. The young man became a clergyman, and the old man lived to make an honourable reparation. For after grandfather, father, and son had officiated at the same diet of worship in the chapel at Longside, he presented him with a beautiful compliment in Latin, which has been thus quaintly but expressively put into English :—

Of the same blood in pulpit now *three* JOHNS appear,—
Grandfather, Father, and—alike to both—a Grandson dear ;
The *first* for genius famed, the *second* for the preacher's art,
In both of which the *third* now plays a shining part ;
The powers of Nature's self no farther stretch could bear,
The Son she with the Father blends, and does the Grandson rear.

Many more instances of Skinner's peculiar facility in versifying might be presented ; in his day, not a few could have quoted them by the dozen, and even yet there are old people who remember some of them. Being informed once of the somewhat sudden death of an individual whose life had not been characterised by either virtue or good deeds, he thus expressed himself—

Beneath this sod lies —— Scott who lived like a fool and died like a sot,
But it's needless to argue whether he was so or not ;
He was a man was despised and will soon be forgot,

and there is sound philosophy in the last line. There is an old prophecy of the famous Rhymer, which goes—

Dee and Don shall run in one,
And Tweed shall run in Tay,
And the bonny water of Ury
Shall bear the Bass away,

of which he furnished the following interpretation, when the union was first proposed between King's and Marischal

Colleges; from recent transactions it seems, in more ways than one, to have had a modern application:—

Ere Scotia was by Longshanks thrall'd,
A noted bard she had,
And Thomas Rhymer he was call'd,
As I have somewhere heard;

Thro' Albion's regions far and wide,
Of mighty fame he was;
And wond'rous things he prophesied
Should sometime come to pass.

That "Dee and Don shall run in one,"
'Mong other things he told;
But to this day 'twas never known
How such a thing could hold.

In mystic garb his speech he drest,
As prophets used to do,
And what he darkly thus exprest
Begins to open now.

'Twas not that Don should run to Dee,
Or Dee run into Don,
But that their *Colleges* should be
United into one.

In honour, then, of Scotland's bard,
May *King* and *Earl* agree,
And *royal* Don not think it hard
To join with *martial* Dee.

So shall Philosophy's fair streams
Enlarge their former course,
And Learning's congregated beams
Shall shine with double force.

According to his favourite maxim that an intermixture of the jocular with the serious is always pleasant,

Mr Skinner often employed a leisure hour during his studies in composing some familiar strain, but it is worthy of remark that all his best productions were written at the suggestion of others. His muse seemed to require some special stimulus to exert its full strength. Although he possessed great powers as a controversialist, and could wield them unsparingly when occasion demanded, in company he was not only agreeable himself, but had a happy facility in making all others agreeable.

The famous song of "Tullochgorum" is a striking example of what we have said, and we will here relate—not exactly as it generally is—the incident which led to its production. On the occasion of a meeting of the Scotch clergy at Ellon, a small village in Aberdeenshire, Mr Skinner had gone to spend the day, with some others, at the house of a Mrs Montgomery. After dinner, a warm dispute of a political nature arose, during which the lady expressed to Mr Skinner—who was taking little part in it—her surprise that no appropriate words had been composed to the "fine old strathspey called the Reel of Tullochgorum," and, having asked for a song, he at once gratified her wishes, and, as Burns has observed, "the wishes of every lover of Scottish song, in this most excellent ballad." Our national poet was so fond of Tullochgorum, that he speaks of it at one time as "the first of songs," and at another as "the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw." Robert Chambers says something of a national as well as a patriotic character may be claimed for it, and certainly no song has taken a deeper hold on the affections of the people, or attained a wider celebrity. It is sung at our social gatherings, printed in every "collection," and there are few in Scotland who could not quote some of its sparkling, pithy lines. What is

more common, when speaking of the tunes of other countries, than—

> I wadna gie our ain strathspeys
> For half a hunder score o' them.

Or, again, on certain occasions—

> For blythe and cheerie we'll be a',
> As lang as we hae breath to draw,
> And dance, till we be like to fa',
> The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

Besides its intrinsic excellencies—generous sentiment, and lively, vigorous expression, the song gives a pleasant and faithful picture of Scottish character and customs.

Another song, which has attained a popularity only surpassed by that of Tullochgorum, affords a marked illustration of some of Skinner's peculiarities. "The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn" is generally supposed to be a metaphor for the whisky still, and this vulgar error may have been fallen into from the fact that the words were written to an old Highland tune which had been so named. The song was requested of Mr Skinner, and the circumstance possesses some interest. About the time he occupied the farm of Mains of Ludquharn, Dr Beattie, then Professor of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, Aberdeen, had been requested to write a pastoral song, and, having made the attempt, produced the following stanza, but could get no farther:—

> The Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
> Sic a ewe was never born,
> Hereabout nor far awa'.

These lines the Professor—himself already an acknowledged poet—sent to Mr Skinner, as the "best qualified in Scotland," with the request to write a song that would suit the tune. With this hint, Mr Skinner at once set

to work, and produced the song which justly occupies so high a place among our household favourites. The heroine was a real character, and what could be more exquisitely touching than the discovery of her sad end :—

Yet last ouk, for a' my keeping—
Wha can speak it without greeting?—
A villain eam when I was sleeping,
Sta' my Ewie, horn and a'.
I sought her sair upo' the morn,
And down aneath a buss o' thorn
I got my Ewie's crookit horn,
But my Ewie was awa'.

And then the genuine lament, and generous call on other bards to join, in which Skinner recognises himself as a poet :—

But thus, poor thing! to lose her life
Aneath a bleedy villain's knife,
I'm really fley't that our guidewife
Will never win aboon't ava.
Oh! a' ye bards benorth Kinghorn,
Call your muses up and mourn,
Our Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Stown frae's, and fell'd and a'!

This song suggested Burns' Elegy on his "pet yowe," Poor Mailie, which, although a very elegant morsel, as Hogg says, resembles the "Ewie" too closely to be admired as original. The similarity in some verses is, indeed, very striking, as, for instance, when Burns says—

Oh, a' ye bards on bonnie Doon,
An' wha on Ayr your chanters tune,
Come, join the melancholius croon
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon—
Poor Mailie's dead!

As a song writer, Skinner justly ranks high. There is nothing forced or artificial about his effusions; natural,

simple, and pathetic, they bear the stamp of sincerity and breathe our common sentiments, sympathies, and aspirations. One has remarked that their titles have only to be named to remind us how much is due to Skinner as a song writer; and Dr Rogers has said, "no song compositions of any modern writer in Scottish verse have, with the exception of those of Burns, maintained a stronger hold of the Scottish heart, or been more commonly sung in the social circle."

But a greater than either—even Robert Burns himself—was a warm admirer equally of the man and the poet, and many a hearty compliment did he give them. When Burns paid his visit to the north in 1787, he spent a short time in Aberdeen, and was introduced to Bishop Skinner at the printing office of Mr Chalmers. To the Ayrshire poet this was an interesting meeting, and with the worthy son of Tullochgorum he spent a most agreeable hour. "Did not your father write 'The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn?" said Burns. "Yes," was the reply. "Oh, an I had the loun that did it!" he continued in a rapture of praise; "but tell him how I love, and esteem, and venerate his truly Scottish muse." In the course of the conversation, Burns remarked that he had been at Gordon Castle, and came by Peterhead. "Then," said the Bishop, "you were within four Scotch miles of Tullochgorum's dwelling." This changed the scene. Burns was deeply grieved at having missed the opportunity of seeing one for whom he entertained so sincere a regard, and whom he delighted to honour as a "brother bard." When parting with the Bishop, shaking his hand as if he had been really a brother, "Well," said the first of Scottish poets, "I am happy in having seen you, and thereby conveying my long-harboured sentiments of regard for your worthy sire; assure him of it in the

heartiest manner, and that never did a devotee of the Virgin Mary go to Loretto with more fervour than I would have approached his dwelling, and worshipped at his shrine." On learning what had taken place, the humble parson poet, though now nearly seventy years of age as lively and social as ever, was duly gratified, and sincerely sorry that he had missed seeing the famous ploughman poet. He at once produced an acknowledgment, in the form of a "Familiar Epistle to Robie Burns, the Ploughman Poet, in his own style." We have first an expression of satisfaction that his son, or "chill," as he calls him, had met with Burns, and then with genuine regret he says—

Wae's my auld heart I wasna wi' you,
Tho' worth your while I couldna gie you;
But sin' I hadna hap to see you
Whan ye was north,
I'm bauld to send my service to you,
Hyne o'er the Forth.

Sae proud's I am that ye hae heard
O' my attempts to be a bard,
And think my muse nae that ill-fawrd,
Seil o' your face!
I wadna wish for mair reward
Than your guid grace.

Then we have a graceful and generous compliment to the poet—

Your bonny beukie, line by line,
I've read, and think it freely fine;
Indeed, I winna ca't divine,
As others might;
For that, ye ken, frae pen like mine,
Wad no be right.

But, by my sang, I dinna wonner,
That ye've admirers mony hun'er;
Let gowkit fleeps pretend to skunner,
And tak offence,
Ye've nacthing said that leuks like blun'er
To fowk o' sense.

After particularising several poems, and pronouncing the ploughman a miracle—"deny't wha may"—a hope is expressed that he may long continue to write as he had been doing—

> But thanks to praise, ye're i' your prime,
> And may chant on this lang, lang, time;
> For, lat me tell you, 'tware a crime
> To haud your tongue,
> Wi' sic a knack's ye hae at rhyme,
> And ye sae young.

In a few easy, friendly verses, Mr Skinner proposes a correspondence with Burns; this is one of them, and there is a touch of fine devotion in it—

> An hour or sae, by hook or crook,
> And maybe twa, some orra ouk,
> That I can spare frae haly beuk,
> For that's my hobby,
> I'll slip awa' to some bye neuk,
> And crack wi' Robie.

And then, concludes the good-hearted old man—

> Sae, canty ploughman, fare ye weel,
> Lord bless you lang wi' hae and heil,
> And keep you aye the honest chiel
> That ye hae been;
> Syne lift ye to a better biel
> When this is dane.

After this, a short but interesting correspondence took place between these rhyming brothers, and an attachment was formed, the depth and strength of which can only be known to the sons of the muse. Burns responded to the Epistle, not in "rhyming ware," but, as he tells us, "in plain dull prose," and designates it the best poetical compliment he ever received. The letter, though without

a date, would appear to have been written at Edinburgh about the end of October, 1787 :—

Reverend and Venerable Sir,—Accept, in plain, dull prose, my most sincere thanks for the best poetical compliment I ever received. I assure you, Sir, as a poet, you have conjured up an airy demon of vanity in my fancy, which the best abilities in your other capacity would be ill able to lay. I regret, and, while I live, shall regret, that when I was in the north, I had not the pleasure of paying a younger brother's dutiful respect to the author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw—"Tullochgorum's my delight!" The world may think slightingly of the craft of song-making if they please, but, as Job says, "Oh, that mine adversary had written a book!" let them try. There is a certain something in the old Scotch songs—a wild happiness of thought and expression—which peculiarly marks them, not only from English songs, but also from the modern efforts of song-wrights, in our native manner and language. The only remains of this enchantment—these spells of the imagination—rests with you. Our true brother, Ross of Lochlee, was likewise "owre cannie"—a "wild warlock"—but now he sings among the "sons of the morning." I have often wished, and will certainly endeavour, to form a kind of common acquaintance among all the genuine sons of Caledonian song. The world, busy in low prosaic pursuits, may overlook most of us; but "reverence thyself." The world is not our peers, so we challenge the jury. We can lash that world, and find ourselves a very great source of amusement and happiness independent of that world. There is a work going on in Edinburgh just now, which claims your best assistance. An engraver in this town has set about collecting and publishing all the Scotch songs, with the music, that can be found. Songs in the English language, if by Scotchmen, are admitted; but the music must all be Scotch. Drs Beattie and Blacklock are lending a hand, and the first musician in town presides over that department. I have been absolutely crazed about it, col-

lecting old stanzas, and every information remaining, respecting their origin, authors, &c. This last is but a very fragment business, but at the end of his second number—the first is already published—a small account will be given of the authors, particularly to preserve those of latter times. Your three songs —"Tullochgorum," "John o' Badenyon," and "Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn"—go in this second number. I was determined, before I got your letter, to write you, begging that you would let me know where the editions of these pieces may be found, as you would wish them to continue to future times; and if you would be so kind to this undertaking as send any songs, of your own or others, that you would think proper to publish. Your name will be inserted among the other authors, "*nill ye, will ye.*" One half of Scotland already give your songs to other authors. Paper is done. I beg to hear from you—the sooner the better, as I leave Edinburgh in a fortnight or three weeks. I am, with the warmest sincerity, Sir, your obliged humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

The work referred to in this letter was "Johnson's Museum," a Musical Miscellany, and it will be seen from the following, dated 14th November, with what readiness Mr Skinner gave his assistance:—

SIR,—Your kind return, without date, but of post-mark October 25th, came to my hand only this day; and, to testify my punctuality to my poetic engagement, I sit down immediately to answer it in kind. Your acknowledgment of my poor but just encomiums on your surprising genius, and your opinion of my rhyming excursions, are both, I think, by far too high. The difference between our two tracks of education, and ways of life, is entirely in your favour, and gives you the preference every manner of way. I know a classical education will not create a versifying taste, but it mightily improves and assists it; and though, where both these meet, there may sometimes be ground for approbation, yet where taste appears single, as it were, and neither cramped nor supported by acquisition, I will

always sustain the justice of its prior claim to applause. A small portion of taste this way I have had almost from childhood, especially in the old Scottish dialect, and it is as old a thing as I remember, my fondness for "Chryste-Kirk on the Green," which I had by heart ere I was twelve years of age, and which, some years ago, I attempted to turn into Latin verse. While I was young, I dabbled a good deal in these things; but, on getting the black gown, I gave it pretty much over, till my daughters grow up, who, being all tolerably good singers, plagued me for words to some of their favourite tunes, and so extorted those effusions which have made a public appearance beyond my expectations, and contrary to my intentions—at the same time that I hope there is nothing to be found in them uncharacteristic, or unbecoming the cloth, which I would always wish to see respected. As to the assistance you propose from me in the undertaking you are engaged in, I am sorry I cannot give it so far as I could wish, and you, perhaps, expect. My daughters, who were my only intelligencers, are all *forisfamiliate*, and the old woman, their mother, has lost that taste. There are two from my own pen which I might give you, if worth the while—one to the old Scotch tune of "Dumbarton's Drums." The other perhaps you have met with, as your noble friend, the Duchess has, I am told, heard of it. It was squeezed out of me by a brother parson in her neighbourhood, to accommodate a new Highland reel for the Marquis birthday, to the stanza of

Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly.

If this last answer your purpose, you may have it from a brother of mine, Mr James Skinner, writer in Edinburgh, who, I believe, can give the music too. There is another humorous thing, I have heard, said to be done by the Catholic priest, Geddes, and which hit my taste much:—

There was a wee wifeikie was comin' frae the fair,
Had gotten a little drapikie, which bred her meikle care;
It took upo' the wifie's heart, and she began to spew,
And quo' the wee wifeikie I wish I binna fou.

I have heard of another new composition by a young ploughman of my acquaintance, that I am vastly pleased with, to the tune of the "Humours of Glen," which, I fear, won't do, as the music, I am told, is of Irish origin. I have mentioned these, such as they are, to show my readiness to oblige you, and to contribute my mite, if I could, to the patriotic work you have in hand, and which I wish all success to. You have only to notify your mind, and what you want of the above shall be sent you. Meantime, while you are thus publicly, I may say, employed, do not sheath your own proper and piercing weapon. From what I have seen of yours already, I am inclined to hope for much good. One lesson of virtue and morality delivered in your amusing style, and from such as you, will operate more than dozens would do from such as me, who shall be told it is our employment, and be never more minded; whereas, from a pen like yours, as being one of the many, what comes will be admired. Admiration will produce regard, and regard will leave an impression, especially when example goes along.

Now binna saying I'm ill bred,
Else, by my troth, I'll no be glad;
For cadgers, ye ha'e heard it said,
And sic like fry,
Maun aye be harlin in their trade,
And sae maun I.

Wishing you, from my poet-pen, all success, and in my other character, all happiness and heavenly direction, I remain, with esteem, your sincere friend, JOHN SKINNER.

We may mention here that, although some have doubted it, "The Wee Wifeikie" is now attributed, by good authorities, to the well-known translator of the Bible and polemical writer, Dr Geddes, who was a native of Banffshire, and officiated as a priest for several years in different parts of the north of Scotland. The "young ploughman" was Mr William Lillie, of Inverugie, near Peterhead, who wrote several songs and poems of con-

siderable merit. The next letter from Burns is dated at Edinburgh, the 14th February, 1788 :—

Reverend and Dear Sir,—I have been a cripple now near three months, though I am getting vastly better, and have been very much hurried beside, or else I would have wrote you sooner. I must beg your pardon for the epistle you sent me appearing in the Magazine. I had given a copy or two to some of my intimate friends, but did not know of the printing of it till the publication of the Magazine. However, as it does great honour to us both, I hope you will forgive it. The second volume of the songs I mentioned to you in my last, is published to-day. I send you a copy, which I beg you will accept as a mark of the veneration I have long had, and shall ever have, for your character, and of the claim I make to your continued acquaintance. Your songs appear in the third volume, with your name in the index, as I assure you, Sir, I have heard your "Tullochgorum," particularly among our west country folks, given to many different names, and most commonly to the immortal author of the "Minstrel," who, indeed, never wrote anything superior to "Gie's a sang Montgomery cried." Your brother has promised me your verses to the Marquis of Huntly's Reel, which certainly deserve a place in the collection. My kind host, Mr Cruickshank of the High School here, and said to be one of the best Latins in this age, begs me to make you his grateful acknowledgments for the entertainment he has got in a Latin publication of yours that I borrowed for him from your acquaintance, and my much respected friend, in this place, the Rev. Dr Webster. Mr Cruickshank maintains that you write the best Latin since Buchanan. I leave Edinburgh to-morrow, but shall return in three weeks. Your song you mentioned in your last, to the tune of "Dumbarton's Drums," and the other, which you say was done by a brother by trade of mine, a ploughman, I shall thank you much for a copy of each. I am ever, reverend Sir, with the most respectful esteem, and sincere veneration, yours,

Robert Burns.

The high compliment here paid to Skinner's Latin poems has been confirmed by others. They have been much admired by men of learning for their purity and elegance. His facility in turning English into Latin was most wonderful, and a translation from Homer, it has been said, loses nothing of the vigour and spirit of the Greek original. The reply to this last letter was written on the 28th of April, in the same year :—

Dear Sir,—I received your last, with the curious present you have favoured me with, and would have made proper acknowledgments before now, but that I have been necessarily engaged in matters of a different complexion. And now that I have got a little respite, I make use of it to thank you for this valuable instance of your good-will, and to assure you that, with the sincere heart of a true Scotsman, I highly esteem both the gift and the giver—as a small testimony of which I have herewith sent you, for your amusement (and in a form which I hope you will excuse, for saving postage) the two songs I wrote about to you already. "Charming Nancy" is the real production of genius in a ploughman of twenty years of age at the time of its appearing, with no more education than what he picked up at an old farmer grandfather's fire-side. And I doubt not but you will find in it, a simplicity and delicacy, with some turns of humour, that will please one of your taste ; at least it pleased me when I first saw it, if that can be any recommendation to it. The other is entirely descriptive of my own sentiments, and you may make use of one or both as you shall see good. You will oblige me by presenting my respects to your host, Mr Cruickshank, who has given such high approbation to my poor Latinity. You may let him know, that as I have likewise been a dabbler in Latin poetry, I have two things that I would, if he desires it, submit, not to his judgment, but to his amusement—the one, a translation of "Chryste-Kirk o' the Green," printed at Aberdeen some years ago ; the other, "*Batrachomyomachia Homeri latinis vestita cum additamentis,*"

given in lately to Chalmers to print, if he pleases. Mr C. will know "*Seria non semper delectant, non josa semper. Semper delectant seria mixta jocis.*" I have just room to repeat compliments and good wishes from, Sir, your humble servant,

JOHN SKINNER.

It is pleasant to see such men as Robert Burns and the Rev. John Skinner thus conversing together, and we think all the more of the "noble twain" in light of their warm and disinterested devotion. Speaking of Skinner's songs on one occasion, Burn's adds—"and what is of still more consequence, he is one of the worthiest of mankind." This was seen in every relation of life. The district around Linshart was perhaps one of the most barren and desolate in Scotland. A plain of almost two miles square was unbroken by either house, or tree, or stone, or shrub; in her gayest moods, it was observed, Nature never wore a pleasant aspect in Long-gate (the appropriate name of one part of the uninhabited waste), nor did the distant prospect compensate for the dreary gloominess of the surrounding landscape. But over the solitude there was always one cheering ray. Every visitor was welcome at the little cottage, and in the darkest night there was a star to guide the humble pedestrian. "What consolation have I," the good man used to say; "my taper never burns in vain. For should it fail to cheer myself and family, it never fails to cheer some roaming youth or solitary traveller, since the polar star itself is not truer to its position than is the Linshart candle, its rise and set, true to the Buchan hind;" and never did he retire to rest with comfort while there was the chance of any human creature traversing the Long-gate. Living in a scene so little calculated to invite poetic inspiration, may account for the fact that Skinner

has written nothing on natural scenery, for we know that he could appreciate the beauties of nature. But all is changed now. The low thatched cottage, which still stands about half a mile southwards of the village of Longside, has been improved, and in place of the dreary waste, the lands are highly cultivated, and the prospect diversified with trees and comfortable dwellings.

About the end of the year 1799, Mr Skinner lost his beloved partner, who had taken her part so joyfully in the cares and responsibilities of rearing a family of seven, and had been the devoted companion of his life for eight years more than half a century. This was a sad affliction to the old man, now nearly eighty, and we cannot better express his feelings and wishes than in the following verses, written about two years afterwards, on being asked by Mr Ferguson of Pitfour what he could do to make him comfortable :—

Lodged in a canty cell of nine feet square,
Bare bread and sowans and milk my daily fare;
Shoes for my feet, soft clothing for my back—
If warm, no matter whether blue or black :
In such a sober, low, contented state,
What comfort now need I from rich or great?

Now in my eightieth year, my thread near spun,
My race through poverty and labour run,
Wishing to be by all my flock beloved,
And for long service by my Judge approved;
Death at my door, and heaven in my eye,
From rich or great what comfort now need I?

Let but our sacred edifice go on
With cheerfulness until the work be done;
Let but my flock be faithfully supplied,
My friends all with their lot well satisfied;
Then, oh, with joy and comfort from on high,
Let me in Christian quiet calmly die,
And lay my ashes in my Grizel's grave,
'Tis all I wish upon the earth to have!

Several years after his bereavement, Mr Skinner received a pressing invitation from his son, the Bishop, to go to Aberdeen and spend his last days in a family where every attention could be shown to his weakness and his wants. His acceptance of this invitation was intimated in a letter dated May 25, 1807, and the following are the last words he wrote:—"I cordially embrace your proposal, and am making preparations to be with you, God willing, next week. By that time you will have got your Forfar friends about you, and I wish much to share in that pleasure, and see once more my children's grand-children, and peace upon Israel. So God grant us a happy meeting, even here, and at last, a still more happy meeting in Abraham's bosom hereafter. This is the constant, and shall, I hope, be the dying wish of your truly and deservedly affectionate father."

Although he may have felt a momentary regret on leaving his rural abode—the scene of his labours for nearly sixty-five years—and resigning his flock to the care of another, Mr Skinner removed to Aberdeen on the 4th of June, but was not long to enjoy the company and kindness of his devoted relatives. After a slight illness, he fell asleep, without a struggle or a sigh, in the arms of his son, on the 16th of June, 1807, being thus in his eighty-sixth year. According to his request, his remains, attended by a large assemblage of sorrowing friends, were carried to the churchyard of Longside, and over the grave was erected a handsome monument, which bears a noble tribute to the memory of him who—LIVED SO JUSTLY RESPECTED, AND DIED SO SINCERELY LAMENTED.

POEMS.

THE MONYMUSK CHRISTMAS BA'ING.

Has ne'er in a' this countra been,
  Sic shou'dering and sic fa'ing,
As happen'd but few ouks sinsyne,
  Here at the Christmas Ba'ing.
At evening syne the fallows keen
  Drank till the niest day's dawing,
Sae snell, that some tint baith their een,
  And could na pay their lawing
    Till the niest day.

Like bumbees bizzing frae a byke,
  Whan hirds their riggins tirr;
The swankies lap thro' mire and syke,
  Wow as their heads did birr!
They yowff'd the ba' frae dyke to dyke
  Wi' unco speed and virr;
Some baith their shou'ders up did fyke,
  For blythness some did flirr
    Their teeth that day.

Rob Roy, I wat he was na dull,
He first leit at the ba',
Syne wi' a rap clash'd Geordie's skull
Hard to the steeple-wa'.
Wha was aside but auld Tam Tull?—
His frien's mishap he saw,—
Syne rair'd like ony baited bull,
And wi' a thud dang twa
To the yird that day.

The tanner was a pimpit bit,
As flimsy as a feather,
He thought it best to try a hit,
Ere a' the thrang shou'd gadyr:
He ran wi' neither fear nor wit,
As fu' o' wind's a bladder;
Unluckily he tint the fit,
And tann'd his ain bum-lether
Fell weel that day.

Syne Francie Winsy steppit in,
A sauchin slivery slype,
Ran forrat wi' a furious din,
And drew a swinging swype.
But Tammy Norie thought nae sin
To come o'er him wi' a snype,
Levell'd his nose flat wi's chin,
And gart his swall'd een sype,
Sawt tears that day.

Bockin red bleed the fleep mair caum,
Ran hame to his nain mammy:
"Alas!" co' Katie, when she saw him,
"Wha did you this, my lammie?"
"A meikle man," co' he, "foul faw him,"
But kent na it was Tammie,
"Rax'd me alang the chafts a wham
"As soon as e'ér he saw me,
"And made me blae."

"Deil rax his chandler chafts," co' Kate,
"For doing you sic wrang,
"Gin I had here the skypel skate,
"Sae weel's I shou'd him bang!"
The gilpy stood, and leuk't fell blate,
To see her in sic a sang;
He squeel'd to her, like a young gyte,
But wad na mird to gang
Back a' that day.

The hurry-burry now began,
Was right weel worth the seeing,
Wi' routs and raps frae man to man,
Some getting, and some gieing;
And a' the tricks of fit and hand,
That ever was in being;
Sometimes the ba' a yirdlins ran,
Sometimes in air was fleeing,
Fu' heigh that day.

Stout Steen gart mony a fallow stoit,
And flang them o'er like fail;
Said, "he'd na care ae clippit doit,
"Tho' a' should turn their tail."
But wi' a yark Gib made his queet
As dwabil as a flail,
And o'er fell he, maist like to greet,
Just at the eemest ga'ill,
O' the kirk that day.

The sutor like tod-lowrie lap,
Three fit at ilka stend:
He did na miss the ba' a chap,
Ilk ane did him commend.
But a lang trypall there was Snap,
Cam' on him wi' a bend;
Gart him, ere ever he wist, cry clap
Upon his nether end;
And there he lay.

Sanny soon saw the sutor slain,
He was his ain hawf-brither;
I wat right well he was fu' brain,
And fu' could he be ither?
He heez'd in ire a puttin-stane,
Twa fell on him thegither,
Wi' a firm gowff he fell'd the tane,
But wi' a gowff the tither
Fell'd him that day.

In came the insett Dominie,
Just riftin frae his dinner,
A young mess John, as ane cou'd see,
Was neither saint nor sinner.
A brattlin band, unhappily,
Drave by him wi' a binner,
And heels-o'er-goudie coupit he,
And rave his guid horn penner
In bits that day.

Leitch lent the ba' a loundrin lick,
She flew fast like a flain;
Syne lighted whare faes were maist thick,
Gart ae gruff Grunsie grain.
He whippit up a rotten stick,
I wat he was na fain,
Leitch wi's fit gae 'im sic a kick,
Till they a' thought him slain,
That very day.

There was nane there could Cowlie byde,
The gryte guidman, nor nane,
He stenn'd bawk-height at ilka stride,
And rampag'd o'er the green:
For the kirk-yard was braid and wide,
And o'er a knablick stane,
He rumbl'd down a rammage glyde,
And peel'd the gardy-bane
O' him that day.

His cousin was a bierly swank,
A derf young man, hecht Rob;
To mell wi' twa he wad na mank
At staffy nevel-job:
I wat na fu' but on a bank,
Whare gadder'd was the mob,
The cousins bicker'd wi' a clank,
Gart ane anither sob,
And gasp that day.

Tho' Rob was stout, his cousin dang
Him down wi' a gryte shudder;
Syne a' the drochlin hempy thrang
Gat o'er him wi' a fudder;
Gin he should rise, and hame o'ergang,
Lang was he in a swidder;
For bleed frae's mou' and niz did bang,
And in gryte burns did bludder
His face that day.

But, waes my heart, for Petrie Gib,
The carlie's head 'twas scaw't,
Upo' the crown he got a skib,
That gart him yowll and claw't.
Sae he wad slip his wa' to Tib,
And spy at hame some fawt;
I thought he might hae gott'n a snib,
Sae thought ilk ane that saw't,
O' th' green that day.

But taylor Hutchin met him there,
A curst unhappy spark,
Saw Pate had caught a camshack cair
At this uncanny wark.
He bade na lang to seek his lare,
But, wi' a yawfu' yark,
Whare Pate's right spawl, by hap, was bare,
He derfly dang the bark
Frae's shins that day.

Poor Petrie gae a weary winch,
He could na do but bann;
The taylor baith his sides did pinch,
Wi' laughing out o' hand;
He jee'd na out o' that an inch,
Afore a menseless man,
Came a' at anes athort his hinch
A sowff, and gart him prann
His bum that day.

The Priest's hireman, a chiel as stark
As ony giant cou'd be,
He kent afore o' this day's wark,
For certain that it wou'd be,
He ween'd to drive in o'er the park,
And ilk ane thought it shou'd be;
Whether his foot had mist its mark,
I canna tell, but fou't be,
He fell that day.

'Ere he cou'd change th' uncanny lair,
And nae help to be gi'en him,
There tumbled a mischievous pair
O' mawten'd lolls aboon him.
It wad ha made your heart fu' sair,
Gin ye had only seen him;
An't had na been for Davy Mair,
The rascals had ondune him,
Belyve that day.

Cry'd black Pate Mill, "God save the King!"
Cry'd gley'd Gib Gun, "God grant it;"
Syne to the ba' like ony thing,
Baith ran, and baith loud vauntit.
But auld James Stuart drew his sting,
Tauld them they could na want it;
He sware he'd gar their harnpans ring
Till black Pate Mill maist fantit,
For fear that day.

A stranger bra', in Highland claise,
Leit mony a sturdy aith,
To bear the ba' thro' a' his faes,
And nae kep meikle skaith.
Rob Roy heard the fricksome fraise,
Weel girded in his graith;
Gowff'd him alang the shins a blaize,
And gart him tyne his faith
And feet that day.

His neiper was a man o' might,
Was few there could ha' quell'd him,
He did na see the dreary sight,
Till some yap gilpy tell'd him.
To Robin syne he flew outright,
As he'd been gaun' to geld him;
But, dolefu' chance, frae some curst wight,
A clammy-houit fell'd him.
Hawf dead that day.

The millart's man, a suple fallow,
Ran's he had been red wud;
He fethir'd fiercely like a swallow,
Cry'd, hech! at ilka thud.
A gawsie gurk, wi' phiz o' yellow,
In youthood's sappy bud,
Nae twa there wad ha gart him wallow,
Wi' fair play i' the mud
On's back that day.

Tam Tull upon him cuist his ee,
Saw him sae mony fuilzie;
He green'd again some play to pree,
And raise anither bruilzie.
Up the kirk-yard he fast did jee,
I wat he was na hoilie,
And a' the kenzies glowr'd to see
A bonnie kind o' tuilzie
Atween them twa.

The millart never notic'd Tam,
Sae browden'd he the ba',
He rumbl'd rudely like a ram,
Dang o'er whiles ane, whiles twa.
His enemy in afore him cam',
Ere ever he him saw;
Raught him a rap on the forestam,
But had na time to draw
Anither sae.

Afore he could step three inch back,
The millart drew a knife,
A curst-like gullie and a snack,
Some blacksmith's wark in Fife.
The lave their thumbs did blythly knack,
To see the stalwart strife;
But Tam, I ken, wad gien a plack
T' hae been safe wi' his wife,
At hame that day.

The parish-clark came up the yard,
A man fu' meek o' mind;
Right jinch he was, and fell weel-fawr'd,
His claithing was fu' fine.
Just whare their feet the dubs had glawr'd,
And barken'd them like bryne,
Gley'd Gibby Gun wi' a derf dawrd,
Beft o'er the grave divine
On's bum that day.

When a' were pitying his mishap,
And swarm'd about the clark,
Wi' whittles some his hat did scrap,
Some dighted down his sark,
Will Winter gae the ba' a chap,
He ween'd he did a wark,
While Sanny wi' a weel-wyl'd wap,
Youff'd her in o'er the park
A space and mair.

Wi' that Rob Roy gae a rair,
A rierfu' rout rais'd he,
'Twas heard, they said, three mile and mair,
Wha likes may credit gie.
I wyte his heart was fu' o' care,
And knell'd fell sair to see,
The cleverest callant that was there,
Play himsel' sic a slee
Begeck that day.

Jock Jalop shouted like a gun,
As something had him ail'd:
Fy, Sirs, co' he, the ba' spel's won,
And we the ba' ha'e hail'd.
Some green'd for hawf an hour's mair fun,
'Cause fresh and nae sair fail'd:
Ithers did Sanny gryte thanks cunn,
And thro' their haffats trail'd
Their nails that day.

Syne a' consented to be frien's,
And lap like sucking fillies:
Some red their hair, some maen'd their banes,
Some bann'd the bensome billies.
The pensy blades doss'd down on stanes,
Whipt out their snishin millies;
And a' ware blyth to tak' their einds,
And club a pint o' Lillie's
Best ale that day.

Has ne'er in Monymuss been seen
Sae mony weel-beft skins:
Of a' the bawmen there was nane
But had twa bleedy shins.
Wi' strenzied shouders mony ane
Dree'd penance for their sins;
And what was warst, scoup'd hame at e'en,
May be to hungry inns,
And cauld that day.

ANSWER TO AN EPISTLE.

[The following was written as an answer "in kind" to an Epistle from Portsoy, which appeared in the Aberdeen Journal, January 11, 1779.]

WHAT can ye be that cou'd employ
Your pen in a sic a tirly-toy,
Frae hyne awa' as far's Portsoy
Aside the sea,
Whare I ken neither man nor boy,
Nor ane kens me?

Be wha ye will, ye're unco frush
At praising what's nae worth a rush,
Except it be to show how flush
Ye're at sic sport,
Yet tho' ye even gar me blush,
I thank you for't.

For, troth, I ha'ena seen a letter
This mony a day I likit better;
Ye ken there's something in our nature
Likes to be reez'd;
Be't just or no, makes little matter,
An we be pleas'd.

My sangs, it seems, hae made a din,
But still I hope it's nae a sin,
Sometimes to tirl a merry pin
As weel's we're able,
Whan fowks are in a laughin bin
For sang or fable,

It's bat about sic smeerless things,
That my auld doited maiden sings,
She never fykes wi' flighty flings
Of heathen gods;
Nor seeks to please or pester kings
Wi' birth-day odès.

And yet may be some girnin gowks
May tak' the pett at harmless jokes,
And think sic simple silly strokes
O' poetrie,
Far unbecomin' sacred fowks
The like o' me.

What tho' some Sage o' holy quorum,
Should lightlie me for Tillygorum,
I'll never steer my sturdy for him,
Wha e'er he be;
As lang's I ken to keep decorum
As well as he.

Indeed I wad on nae pretence
Wiss to tyne sight o' reverence;
Sae, if sic fowk be men o' sense,
I ask their pardon,—
But value not a fool's offence
Ae single fardin.

Your M.A.s and your L.L.D.s,
That get a vogue and mak' a fraize,
I dinna hadd them worth three straes,
Wi' a' their fame;
Nor do I envy ony praise
That's gi'en to them.

A frien' like you delights me sair,
An' hits my fancy till a hair,
Sae couthy and sae debonnair,
An' then sae plain;
It does nae need a birn o' lair
To write again.

Now, honest onkent, fare ye weel,
I guess you be some pawky chiel,
That's may be been at Allan's skuil
Some orra time,
And seems to understand the tweel
O' rustic rhyme.

But print nae mair, I beg it o' you,
Lest CHA'MERS say, he's plaguit wi' you,
You see I have nae thing to gie you
That's worth your while,
But only send my wisses to you,
In your ain style.

Lord keep you, man, frae sin and shame;
Frae skaith a' outing, and at hame;
An gie you ay, (blest be His name!)
What He thinks fit;
Tak' this frae me in kindly frame,
Instead o' wit.

ON THE FRENCH CONVENTION.

What stupid creatures are the French,
Quite free from superstition;
Yet when they die, 'tis hard to say,
What can be their condition?

Of Heaven they entertain no thought,
Since it can no way fit them;
And as for Hell, the *despot* there
Has more sense than admit them.

If then for Hell they have no chance,
And to Heav'n have no pretension;
Some other dwelling must be found,
To lodge the French Convention.

Or, as their new philosophy
Has laid the fine foundation,
Their only prospect now must be
A blest *annihilation.*

How must these miscreant wretches move
Our anger, or our laughter,
Who wish to live like monsters here,
And *nothing* be hereafter!

Preserve us, *Reason*, taught by *Grace*,
From reveries so beastly;
By whomsoever set afloat,
By *Price*, or *Payne*, or *Priestly*.

May Britons thankful still, and wise,
Beware of Gallic leaven;
So we need have no fear of *Hell*,
And grace will give us *Heaven*.

EPISTLE TO A DAUGHTER.

This affectionate epistle, addressed to a daughter who had patiently endured many afflictions, is dated January 29, 1795, and now published for the first time. The "two blooming youths" referred to, had been led into a dispute which resulted in their being apprehended on a grave charge; but, having been tried at Aberdeen, they were proved innocent and sent home to their sorrowing parents, with "honour and applause."

Accept, dear ———, of a father's strain,
To soothe a daughter's heart-corroding pain.
Thy Charlie gone!—Poor, sweet, engaging child,
In looks so charming, and in mind so mild.
The last of nine thy tender care had rear'd,
And well deserving of thy fond regard,
Pull'd from this world in dawn of youthful years,
From all thy prospects, and from all thy fears;
Not by the quick-paced march of fever's rage,
Nor childish malady, of childish age,
Chin-cough, and measles, ev'n the frightful power
Of loathsome small-pox, all got safely o'er;
But slow and lingering, under many a groan
Of tortured weeks and months, from cruel stone,
Beyond the reach of medicinal cure,
Beyond the strength of childhood to endure;
With manhood's agonies, poor infant torn,
With manhood's courage, by poor infant born;
In writhing posture clinging round thy knee,
And looking up with wistful eyes to thee,

Now wishing Death to ease his shatter'd frame,
Now lisping out, for help, his Saviour's name,
His face convulsed, his once bright eyes aghast,
And pained, yet patient, breathing out—his last!
Distressful scene! to a fond mother's breast,
'Bove what in saddest lays can be exprest!

Yet think, my dear, how different is this blow
From what thou felt not twenty months ago:
Two blooming youths, their drooping father's prop,
Their brethren's favourites, and their mother's hope,
All of a sudden driv'n from peaceful home
To underly the law's severest doom,
By Falsehood charg'd, by Malice quick pursu'd,
Their near relations thirsting for their blood,
One dragg'd to jail, the other forc'd to fly,
Not stung by guilt, but seeking remedy:
Thy anxious heart uncertain of their fate,
And bleeding o'er their miserable state,
'Twixt fears and hopes nine long weeks on the rack—
Fears for their loss and hopes to get them back—
Thy parents sunk in unavailing grief,
Thy husband wand'ring to procure relief,
And thou alone within thy walls to mourn,
Once happy there, now weeping and forlorn;
No neighbour near vouchsafing to condole,
In soft compassion with thy wounded soul,

But standing off, all Christian ties forgot,
And shunning, like the plague, the wretched cot!

Not so this present cause of second woe—
No stroke from hellish or from human foe,
But gentle touch of Heavenly Father's rod,
The gracious pleasure of a gracious God,
Calling thy Charlie to more lasting bliss
In other worlds than could be found in this,
Through rugged paths, but such as Heav'n thought best,
To lead the sufferer to his bed of rest;
Thy neighbours crowding now about thy door
And showing what they had not shown before,
Their flint of soul, or soften'd or subdued
By grace or guilt, to more becoming mood.
Thy mother using all love's arts to drown
Thy sorrows in the memory of her own;
Thy father acting, with scarce-smother'd tear,
His last good office o'er a grandchild's bier;
Thy husband, with his yet remaining seven,
Conveying to the grave a guest for heaven;
Sweet balsam this to mollify the smart,
And still the throbbings of a mother's heart!

Remember, too, how lively were thy joys
To clasp again thy persecuted boys,
When Heav'n and Law had justified their cause,
And sent them home with honour and applause,

In spite of all that malice could devise
To drive and keep them from thy longing eyes;
More joy in this to find them thus reliev'd,
Than if thou ne'er hadst for their absence griev'd:
And such, in God's good time, thy joy shall be
To find this absent child restor'd to thee,
And thee again to him, no more to part—
No separation more to thrill the heart.

Thy heart, poor ———! Poor has been thy life
From new-born infant up to married wife,
Ere yet three suns had warm'd thy tender form,
Ere yet thy mother had got o'er her storm,
A band of armed ruffians round the bed
Where child and mother were together laid,
Thy father seized in silent hour of night,
Thy mother trembling and half-kill'd with fright,
And thou, sweet babe, with many a whimpering cry,
Uncared for, and neglected, forced to lie;
Thy maiden years with weakness often vext,
Thy married state with toils and cares perplext,
Yet cheerful under all and still content,
Without envying, and without complaint,
Resigned to God, and pleased with all His ways;
'Tis He sustains thee—His be all the praise.

O! may we all at last be called to meet
In heavenly mansions at our Saviour's feet,

Thyself, thy husband, parents, boys, and all,
With church trumphant at th' enliv'ning call,
Purg'd from the stains and sorrows of this earth,
And by grace fitted for celestial mirth,
Where no insulting foe can dash our joy,
No rotten-hearted friend our peace annoy ;
But all with love and harmony abound,
Combining all in one melodious sound
Of tuneful song, with raptures to adore
The great Preparer of eternal store,
Through endless ages of—one evermore!

Take this and keep it, till gray hairs come on—
'Twill mind thee of thy father when he's gone.

THE OWL AND THE ASS,

AN INNOCENT FABLE.

ONCE on a time, no matter when,
Nor under what a king,
But so it was, in yonder wood,
An Owl began to sing;

With phiz so grave, and whoop so loud,
He made a learned din,
And all the burden of his song
Was "O! the light within!

"This inward light, this jewel hid,
"Is all in all to me,
"By it I know, I judge, and act,
"Nor would I wish to see.

"What blockheads call external guides,
"I'm wiser far without,
"And had I eyes, as others have,
"I'd surely pluck them out.

"No foreign help do I require,
"To guide my flights of youth,
"For *common sense* is all I need
"To lead me into truth.

"When in self-cogitation wrapt,
"I use my Light innate,
"'Tis then I search th' eternal laws
"Of nature and of fate.

"Your outward light may be of use
"To yonder herd of fools,
"The light within is what directs
"Philosophers and owls."

An Ass, who long had been his friend,
Pricks up his leathern ears,
And gapes and swallows every note,
Like music of the spheres.

"So sweet a song so wondrous sweet,
"Was ever such a strain?
"And O! my dearest Doctor Owl,
"Repeat it o'er again!"

Charm'd with the sound of booby's praise,
The self-taught Sage agrees,
And makes additions here and there
A second time to please.

Then o'er and o'er like minstrels meet,
They both in concert act,
And what the one demurely sings,
The other echoes back.

And now the Ass is qualified
To play the Teacher's part,
Till every ass in yonder wood
Has got the song by heart.

[Some silly remarks on the foregoing, having appeared in the Newspapers, under the mask of "A Scampering Wolf," produced the following appropriate reply.]

How must fair Science now revive,
And Truth lift up her head,
When owls thus sing, and asses learn,
And wolves vouchsafe to read?

That birds and beasts in old times spoke,
We know from Æsop's page,
But never one essay'd to *read*,
Till this enlightened age.

Thrice happy age above what has
In former ages been,
And blest the land, above all lands,
Where such rare sights are seen.

Philosophy shall surely now
Her blossoms wide expand,
And good old heathen wisdom shed
Her blessings o'er the land.

Long therefore may Minerva's bird
Possess unrivall'd fame,
And long may all the long-ear'd tribe
Their praises loud proclaim!

And O! that every "Scampering Wolf"
Would thus employ his time,
To "sport himself with paper scraps"
And snarl in harmless rhyme.

ON BURNS' ADDRESS TO A LOUSE.

These verses were written at the suggestion of a lady who did not like Burns' address to the "crawlin ferlie" which he saw on a lady's bonnet in the church of Mauchline.

A Lousie on a lady's bonnet!
Disgracefu' dirgy! fie upon it!
An' you, forsooth, to write a sonnet
On sic a theme!
Guid fa' me, man, I wad na done it
For a' your fame.

Nae doubt your ballad's wise and witty;
But fowks will say it was na pretty
To yoke sic twa in conjunct ditty,
Them baith to hit;
And ca' you but a twa-fac'd nitty,
Wi' a' your wit.

For a' your being a bard of note,
Ye shou'd na minded sic a mote,
To mak' a warl's wonner o't,
As ye hae dane;
But past it for an orra spot,
Whare't shou'd na been.

Your philosophic fitty fies,
Tho' clad in sweet poetic guise,
The ladies will them a' despise,
Gin ye express
The least rebaghle ony wise
Upo' their dress.

When ye bemoan'd the herryt mousie,
Rinning as gin't had been frae pousie;
When couter-nib down-stroy'd her housie,
Ye pleas'd us a';
But thus to lilt about a lousie,
Black be your fa'!

What tho' at godly Ayrshire meeting,
Sic thing had happen'd past dispeeting,
Was that enough to fa' a writing
About a story,
That ladies canna hear repeating
Wi' ony glory?

Its nae mows matter, man, to jibe,
Your jeer-cuts at the sweet-fac'd tribe;
Their charms will ay some body bribe
To tak' side wi' them,
Whan chiels like you set up to scribe
O'er freely o' them.

The bonny Duchess, seil upon her!
That's heez'd you up to a' your honour,
And been to you sae braw a Donor,
May say "what raiks!"
And think ye've flung some wee dishonour
At a' the sex.

Fouk wad do well to steek their een,
At sights that shou'd na a' be seen,
Or whan they see, lat jokes alane,
Gin they had sense;
For little jokes hae often gi'en
Fell great offence.

I'se warran' ye hae read or heard,
Of an ald hairum-skairum bard,
Saw anes a sight was as ill-fawrd,†
As your's cou'd be;
An for his sight got sma' reward,
And sae may ye.

Sae, Robie Burns, tak' tent in time,
And keep mair haivins wi' your rhyme,
Else you may come to rue the crime
O' sic a sonnet,
And wiss ye had ne'er seen a styme
O' Louse nor Bonnet.

† Ovid.

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

The following was written, probably in 1765, on giving up the farm of Mains of Ludquharn, near Longside, which Mr Skinner held of the Earl of Errol for several years.

You ask, my friend, whence comes this sudden flight
Of parting thus with husbandry outright?
What mean I by so strange a foolish whim,
Am I in earnest, or think you I but dream?
True, you may think so, but suspend, I pray,
Your judgment, till you hear what I can say.
I join with you that there is no great harm
In clergy-folks to hold a little farm.
But poverty's the scourge, and I can tell,
As dire a scourge as any out of Hell:
The farm indeed can furnish malt and meal,
But gentry must have more than cakes and ale.
There's wife, and sons, and daughters to maintain,
Sons must be bred, and daughters will be vain,
What signifies, that they can knit or spin?
There's twenty needs for all that they can win.
Thus one needs this, another she needs that,
Ribbons, and gloves, and lace, and God knows what.
As far as their own penny goes they pay,
When that is spent, they then must take a day,
"Papa will clear't;" they have no more to say.

You can't imagine how much I'm distrest,
There's not a day that I enjoy rest:
Except on that blest day the first in seven,
That day appointed, as it was in Heaven!
Then I'm myself: For when the gown goes on,
I'm no more Farmer, than, but Pres'ter John.
The folks with pleasure hear me sermonize,
And once a week I'm reckon'd learn'd and wise;
The pulpit brings me into people's favours,
And Sunday screens from creditors and cravers:
But Monday comes, of course, and then begins
A new week's penance for the last week's sins.
The mistress takes the morning by the top,
She must have tea and sugar, starch and soap,
Candles and hops, all which are now so dear,
I answer nothing, but am forc'd to hear.

In comes the ploughman with important brow,
"Well, Thomas lad, and what would you say now?"
"We're out of iron, the horses must be shod,
"The coulter needs a lay:"—"That's very odd;
"Go to the merchant"—"He has none come home,"
(I know the cause, but must conceal't from Tom,)
"Why, then, we'll get it somewhere else."-"That's true,
"The pleugh needs claithing and must have it new,
"We cannot do without a foremost yoke,
"And t'other day the meikle stilt was broke."
"Well I shall see about it."—Tom goes out,
And I get clear of him for once about.

There's one knocks—"Is the minister within?"
The servant answers "yes," and he comes in:
"Well, John, I'm glad to see you; howd' ye do?"
"I thank you, Parson, how goes all with you?"
"Sit down! what news?"—"Not much, the times are hard:
(I know what's coming now, and am prepar'd,)
"I've got a rub, I ne'er got any such."
"I'm sorry for't, but hope it is not much."
"Why, faith, a great deal, forty pounds and more,
I can assure you, will not clear the score:"
"What way?"—"By that damn'd rascal, Duncan Aire.
Losses like this must soon make merchants bare,
And force them many times to seek their own,
Sooner than otherwise they would have done."
"Afflictions, John, you know will always be,—"
"The little trifle, Sir, 'twixt you and me,"
"Betty, bring in a drink—here's to you, John,"
"Your good health, Parson," drinks and then goes on:
I study all I can to ward the blow,
And try to shift the subject, but no—no;
What can I do, but tell how matters stand;
"I cannot pay you,—money's not at hand,
As soon's I can I'll do't,"—John in a huff,
Says, "Parson, fare ye well"—and so walks off.

Now I expect some ease, when, in a crack,
In comes a note, with *Reverence* on the back:

"Sir, times are bad, I know not what to do,
I'm in a strait, else had not troubled you,
Have sent you your account, which please peruse,
Errors excepted—hopes your kind excuse.
A draught comes on me, money must be got,
And I'll be ruined, if you send it not;
At any other time you may command,
And shall be serv'd with what I have in hand,
So, Sir, no more at present, but remains."
This must be answered, so I rack my brains,
And fall to work, part argue, partly flatter,
Be't taken well or ill makes little matter;
Debtors must still be dungeons of good nature.
My Lord's officer comes next, with "Sir, I'm sent,
To warn you in to pay the Whitsun' rent:
The factor's angry, and bade tell you so,
That you're so long in paying what you owe,
Expects you will with speed provide the sum,
And be more punctual in time to come:"
I hing my head betwixt chagrin and awe,
For officers, you know, are limbs of law.

Thus farm and house demands come on together,
Both must be answer'd, I can answer neither;
I put them off till Lammas, Lammas comes,
Our vestry meets, and I get in my sums;
The half year's stipend makes a pretty show,
But twenty ways poor fifteen pounds must go:

Scarce one night does it in my coffers stay,
Like Jonah's gourd that wither'd in a day;
First come, first serv'd with me, is still the way;
Then for my Lord, whatever comes to pass,
My Lord must even wait till Martinmas:
Well, Martinmas a few weeks hence comes on,
As certainly it will: what's to be done?
Shoemakers, tailors, butchers, to be paid,
For shoes, and clothes, and meat, must all be had:
There's servants' fees, and forty things beside;
How then can fifteen pounds so far divide?
Why! we'll set through, and try another year,
The worst is but the worst, let's never fear;
My Lord, God bless him, is a gracious man,
And he can want awhile, if any can;
We'll sell some meal, perhaps, or spare a cow;
But what will be the case, if that wont do:
Why then I'll borrow! I have many a friend,
There's such and such a one, all rich, and surely kind;
Well they're applied to, and behold the end:
They all condole indeed, but cannot lend;
They're griev'd to see the minister in strait,
And fain would help him, but I come too late.
And, after trying every shift in vain,
The old distressful life returns again.
Would any friend advise me thus to bear
Repeated strokes like these, from year to year?

No! th' event, be what it will, prepar'd am I,
And now resolv'd another course to try:
Sell corn and cattle off; pay every man;
Get free of debt and duns as fast's I can:
Give up the farm with all its wants, and then,
Why even take me to the book and pen,
The fittest trade I find, for CLERGYMEN.

EPISTLE TO CAPTAIN ROBERT BAIGRIE.

Captain Baigrie, who had been an early and intimate friend of the Author, and a frequent visitor at Linshart, from being a Jamaica shipmaster became a farmer. He was for some time in Mill of Rora in the vicinity of Longside, but afterwards removed to Sutherlandshire.

"Ay, ay, what's this?" I ken you'll say,
"And whare comes this epistle frae?"
Forsooth, it comes frae Linshart brae,
Whare anes we twa
Us'd to be merry mony a day:
But that's awa'.

I want to crack a touchie wi' you,
Since now I've little chance to see you,
It's a' the guid that I can do you
To wiss you weel,
And pray the Lord may ever gie you,
Baith hae and heal!

Ye've ta'en a jump leuks right gigantic,
To norland hills frae gulf Atlantic;
And fowk may think ye some wee frantic,
In sic a lowp;
But tarry breeks was ay romantic,
And lykit scowp.

Better, ye'll say, be telling tales
Aneath a reef o' highland dales,
Or greeving follows at their flails,
In barns weel thackit,
Than hoize and furl at flappin' sails
Wi' droukit jacket.

I doubt na, whan ye steer'd your ship,
The bleed has aft gane frae your lip,
Now ye may lie upo' your hip,
And tak' your ease;
Or thro' the hills a huntin' skip
As far's you please.

Your hawsers and your fleeand sheets,
Ye've turn'd them into sowms and theets,
An' a' your sough o' sonsie fleets,
An' shippin' news,
Is fawin awa' to coupin breets,
An' trailin pleughs.

Yet mony a risk's in farmin'-wark,
Tho' pleugh, and purse, and a' be stark,
It's but like rinnin' i' the dark,
Whare mony ane
Has run fou sair and mist their mark,
When a' was dane.

I wadna hae ye o'er soon boast,
Or count your winnin's by your cost,
A dreel o' wind, or nip o' frost,
Or some sic flap,
Has aft the farmer's prospects crost,
And fell'd the crap.

Sae live at land's ye did at sea,
Uncertain now what neist may be,
There's naething sure to you nor me,
Aneath the meen,
But that we baith sometime maun die,
Lord kens how sein!

Nae doubt your schemes may right weel wirk,
'Mang girssy glens and braes o' birk,
Wi' mony a staig, and mony a stirk,
An' fowth o' gear;
But what comes o' ye for a Kirk,
Gin I might speir?

I've spoken to a frien' o' mine,
An 'onest aefauld soun' divine,
Gin he cou'd sometimes wi' you dine,
Ye've seen the man,
And do't he will, I ken his stryne,
As far's he can.

Be that as't may, keep true and tight,
To what ye ken to be the right,
An' whare ye hae na best o' light,
Tak' what ye hae,
But dinna turn a graceless wight,
For ony say.

Now binna sayin' I'm ill bread,
Else o' my troth, I'll no be glad,
For cadgers, ye hae heard it said,
And sic like fry,
Maun ay be harlin in their trade,
An sae maun I.

An' yet I wad on nae pretence,
Incline to gie a frien' offence,
Nor wad I had sae little mense,
As gane sae far,
Had ye not been the lad o' sense,
I'm seer ye are.

Ye ken or e'er ye got a frock,
I took you in to my sma' flock,
An' ye and I have had a trock
This forty year,
Sae what I gab in sooth or joke,
Ye e'en maun bear.

My love to a' about *Midgairty*,
To Menie, Bob, and bonny Bertie,
I hope ye fin't as braw a pairtie
As mill o' Rora,
Lang may ye a' keep haill and hairtie,
An' free o' sorrow.

Now, Robie, fareweel for a time,
My muse ye see's nae way sublime,
But's rattled out a leash o' rhyme,
Sic as was in her,
An' a' to tell you just that I'm
Your frien', JOHN SKINNER.

TO A YOUNG BOOKSELLER.

I got your letter, honest cock,
And thank you for your kindly joke;
But d'ye think a saughin block
The like o' me,
Can furnish out a decent stock
O' poetrie?

Wad ye hae me be sic a fiel,
As gin I were but at the skuil,
To gather ilka rhyme or reel
That I hae scrawl'd,
An' gie them out to ony chiel,
To be o'erhawl'd?

Na, na, my lad, that winna do,
I ken the warld better now;
Whan I was young and daft like you
It might hae dane,
But near threescore wad best I trow,
Lat them alane.

Besides, I'm tauld, the singin' Lasses,
That heft sae aft about Parnassus,
Were never fond o' sober asses,
That cou'd na drink
A score or twa o' bumper glasses,
To mend their clink.

Your bucks that birl the forain berry,
Claret, and port, and sack, and sherry,
Or ev'n as muckle English perry
As they can draw;
I dinna mein them to be merry,
And lilt awa'.

But that camsteary—what-d'ye-caw't?
(I think it's genius, walie fa't,)
That helps the Poet to create
Baith form and matter,
Will never dreep frae draffy mawt,
Or bare spring water.

An' then there's that ill hadden ghaist,
That *Gerard* has sae finely grac'd
Wi' stately stile, and ca't her "*Taste*,"
A pox upon her,
She winna let a poor auld Priest
Gain muckle honour.

Now baith o' them's aboon my reach,
For a' that I can fraise or fleitch,
What tho' fowk says that I can preach,
Nae that dein ill,
I tell you, man, I hae na speech
For critics' skill.

It's them that fleys me wi' their taws,
Their cankart cuffs, and whitty whaws,
An' troth the carlies might hae cause,
To curse and bann,
Gin I were ane that sought applause
Frae ony man.

But now and then to spin a line
Or twa, nor fash the tunefu' nine;
I'm seir, there's nae man needs repine,
Whae'er he be,
Critic, or bard, o' hamil kine,
Or high degree.

Yet after a' I'm unco' sweir
To lat you print the idle geir
That I've made up this forty year,
And some guid mair,
Ye wadna clear the cost, I fear,
Wi' a' the ware.

But, may be, gin I live as lang,
As nae to fear the chirmin chang
Of Gosses grave, that think me wrang,
And even say't,
I may consent to lat them gang,
And tak' their fate.

Remember me to a' your frien's,
The lads like you that lie their lanes,
And them that's gotten bonny Jeans
To lie aside them,
Lang may they fitt the causey stanes,
An' guid betide them!

TO A YOUNG CLERGYMAN.

The young Clergyman, to whom these sympathetic lines were addressed, was the late Bishop Torry, for many years Incumbent of Peterhead. They were written at his own suggestion on the death of his mother and a brother, who were crushed by the sudden fall of their dwelling-house.

How hard, Lorenzo, is the boon you ask,
And how unequal I to such a task?
I, whose weak muse, borne down with weight of years,
O'er common griefs might shed some tender tears,
But finds her powers of lamentation fail,
And sinks and sickens at thy doleful tale?

A Mother! (ah, the venerable name,
Which my young lips were never taught to frame,)
She, whose warm bowels form'd thy infant span,
Whose tenderest watchings nurs'd thee up to man,
She, earthly image of the highest love,
Which ev'n the yearnings of a God could move!

A Brother, too! the next congenial tie
Of strongest force in nature's symmetry!
Thy partner thro' a course of prattling years,
In all youth's fondnesses, and all its fears!
Both in a moment robb'd of vital breath,
And quick and sudden hurry'd into death!

No hasty fever, no slow pac'd decay,
To snatch the young, or wear the old away;
The humble cot, which, for convenience rear'd,
Harbour'd no mischief, and no danger fear'd,
Where, by the cheerful fire in peace secure,
They now had spent the pleasant evening hour,
Crush'd all at once by one stupendous shock
Of tumbling rubbish from th' impending rock!
No sturdy pillars to support the weight
Of such a burthen, thrown from such a height;
The unsuspecting victims, half undrest,
In preparation for a sweet night's rest;
No boding omen heard, no warning giv'n,
No time to lift their souls and eyes to heav'n;
Bury'd beneath th' enormous mass all round,
And breathing, tomb'd in dust above the ground;
Their shatter'd limbs all into atoms crash'd,
And bones and bowels to one chaos dash'd!!

But why attempt description? words are vain!
The dreadful ruin mocks my languid strain—
And does my friend need counsel how to bear
This wound so piercing—stroke indeed severe;
Then think on what thy hoary sire must feel,
(For sure thy sire had not a heart of steel)
When by next dawn return'd from distant toil,
In hopes of welcome from thy mother's smile,
He saw, and star'd, and gaz'd at this and that,
And hop'd, and fear'd, and wish'd he knew not what?

'Till, like a voice, he heard from menial maid,
With wife and son in dire sepulchre laid,
Who ten long hours had groan'd an age of pain,
And just expiring, breath'd the how and when.
Now view him in a gulph of horror cast,
His heart-strings breaking, and his eyes aghast,
Like pictur'd patience, all benumb'd he stands,
And tries to lift, but drops his trembling hands;
No groan his heart emits, his eye no tear—
Good heaven! what more can mortals suffer here?

'Tis this, you say, that aggravates the smart,
'Tis this that doubly rends the filial heart.
True, unfledg'd sufferer, thou hast much to do,
To act the *Son*, and shine the *Christian* too:
Insensible to this what heart can be,
Not form'd of marble, or hewn out of tree?
Lorenzo's heart, tho' cut, must not repine
At what, it knows, comes from a hand divine;
But strive in due submission to comply,
Nor boldly dare to guess the reason why.
The philosophic sage, from self's proud school,
May act, or feign to act, th' heroic fool:
At nature's feelings may pretend to mock,
And wisely sullen stand th' appalling shock.
The heav'n-taught Christian may, and must do more,
May grieve from nature, must from grace adore;
Adore the love of ev'n a chast'ning God,
And kiss the gracious hand that wields the rod.

TO THE MEMORY OF A WORTHY FARMER.

What! shall my rural muse in feeble strain
Of pompous deaths and titled woes complain,
And shall she be asham'd to drop a tear
In public, o'er a worthy Farmer's bier?
A Farmer! name of universal praise,
And noble subject for the poet's lays:
This one, a Farmer of superior mind,
For higher spheres from early love design'd,
Taught to converse with men of rank and note,
Yet stooping to adorn the rural cot;
There, calm and quiet in his humble state,
Lov'd by the good, and valu'd by the great,
Disdaining flattery, yet without offence,
The man of manners, virtue, grace, and sense.
In agriculture's wide extended tract,
Skill'd and instructive, punctual and exact,
Prudent from principle in every part,
Which or concerns the head, or moves the heart.
To God religious, to his neighbour just,
And strictly honest in each branch of trust;
Ne'er jarring from himself, but still the same,
Clear in his thoughts and steady in his aim

In speech engaging and in taste refin'd,
The Farmer's pattern, and the scholar's friend.
To such a Farmer surely praise is due,
And all who knew him can declare it true,
Can tell how uniform o'er life's vain stage
He stept in virtue's paths to good old age.
Fair was his life, and blest, we hope, his end;
To each good man may Heav'n such mercy send!
Asks any reader who this man could be,
So much esteem'd by all, and prais'd by me:
Know, honest friend, that in thy way to fame,
A Farmer's footsteps do thy notice claim,
And JAMES ARBUTHNOT was that Farmer's name.

TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN

WHO DIED OF THE SMALL POX.

'Twas winter, and the sickly sun was low,
Thro' yonder fields I took my lonely way;
Musing on many a gloomy scene of woe,
As oft I wont in evening calm to stray.

With languid step, advancing I perceiv'd
A passenger of aspect pale and wan;
With frequent sighs his labouring bosom heav'd,
And down his cheek the briny torrent ran.

"What ails thee, friend?" I ask'd in pitying tone
Of sympathetic mood to speak relief
"Say, what's the cause that makes thee thus to moan,
And why thy visage pictur'd thus with grief?"

"Shall I not moan?" the stranger sad reply'd,
"And thus in sighs my inward grief express?
How can my troubled heart its sorrows hide?
My melting soul conceal its deep distress?

"Last week a darling brother was my boast,
The last born product of my mother's womb;
This darling brother t'other day I lost,
To day I laid him in the silent tomb.

"Meek his deportment, and his manners mild,
In all his carriage undisguis'd and plain;
As virgin chaste, and soft as new born child,
Comely his features, and his look serene.

"Steady in principle, and in practice pure,
With modesty and manly sense endued;
His honest heart from vanity secure,
The paths of vice with just abhorrence view'd.

"Not poorly mean, nor anxious to be great,
His mind tho' lofty, and his genius bright;
Yet pleas'd and happy in his humble state,
And Music, heavenly gift, his dear delight!

"How gracefully, amidst th' applauding ring,
His well taught fingers mov'd the lyre along;
Whether to mirth he briskly struck the string,
Or on soft psalt'ry touch'd the sacred song!

"Oft have I seen, when jocund friends were met,
In summer's evenings or by winter's fire;
The listening choir in emulation set!
What tongue should most th' enchanting youth admire

"But now no more his notes shall charm the fair,
No more his Numbers soothe th' attentive Swain,
With Tullochgorum's dance-inspiring air,
Or Roslin-castle's sweet, but solemn strain.

"In early dawn of merit and of fame,
To wish'd-for health, from sickness just restor'd;
The loathsome pustules seiz'd his tender frame,
And sudden gave the stroke that's now deplor'd!

"'Tis this that grieves me,—this the loss I mourn,
Excuse a sorrowing brother's heavy tale;
No more shall he to earth and me return,
Nor sighs, nor tears, nor love, can now prevail!"

He stopt, the tears again began to flow,
And sigh on sigh burst from his throbbing breast;
My feeling heart soon catch'd the poor man's woe,
And soon my eye the rising tear confest.

"Dear youth," I cry'd, "whom heav'n has call'd away,
'Midst early innocence from this vain stage;
Safe now, we hope, in fields of endless day,
Above the follies of a sinful age!

"In these bright regions fill'd with many a Saint,
Sweet be thy rest, and blest thy wakening be!
And may kind Heav'n at last in mercy grant
A happy meeting to thy friends and thee!"

A MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION.

And is she gone, the once so lovely maid,
Gone hence, and now a dear departed shade!
Snatch'd from this world in early dawn of life,
When but beginning to be call'd a wife?

Ye virgin tribe, whom chance may lead this way,
Where brightest beauty moulders into clay,
Behold this stone, nor be asham'd to mourn,
A while o'er MARY ALEXANDER'S urn—
Then pause a little, while these lines you read,
And learn to draw instruction from the dead—
She, who lies here, was once like one of you,
Youthful and blyth, and fair, as you are now:
One week beheld her a bright blooming bride,
In marriage pomp laid by her lover's side;
The next we saw her in death's livery drest,
And brought her breathless body here to rest.
Not all this world's gay hopes, nor present charms,
Nor parents tears, nor a fond husband's arms,
Could stamp the least impression on her mind,
Or fix to earth a soul for heav'n design'd;
Calmly she left a scene so lately try'd,
Heav'n call'd her hence, with pleasure she complied,
Embrac'd her sorrowing friends, then smil'd—and dy'd.

ON A FARMER'S GRAVESTONE.

IN THE CHURCHYARD OF LONGSIDE.

HERE lies, consign'd a while to promis'd rest,
In hopes to rise again among the blest,
The precious dust of one, whose course of life
Knew neither fraud, hypocrisy, nor strife:
A Husband loving, and of gentle mind;
A Father careful, provident and kind;
A Farmer active, from no sordid view;
A Christian pious, regular, and true:
One who, in quiet, trod the private stage
Of rural labour, to a ripe old age.
Lov'd by his neighbours, honour'd by his own;
Liv'd without spot, and died without a groan.

Long may his humble virtues be rever'd;
Long be his name remember'd with regard;
And long may Agriculture's school produce
Such honest men as ALEXANDER BRUCE.

Si musæ fas sit pietatis pangere laudes,
Quid vetat Agricolas commemorâsse pios?

TO THE AUTHOR'S GRANDSON,

ON HIS MARRIAGE AT FORFAR, AUGUST 19, 1798.

ONE trifling sixpence more, dear *Forfar* JOHN,
To pay for this poor scrawl, and I have done.
The subject opens up a brilliant scene,
And calls for something from my rustic pen:
But don't expect a flow of warbling lays
To charm your ear, or chant your *Fair*-one's praise,
Unfit for such a task, my torpid muse,
Were I to ask it, would the task refuse,
Nor venture to debase the theme sublime
With fustian stanzas of Paganic rhyme.
My brink of eighty wears a frozen hue,
Too sable for the charms of such a view:
Yet, old and languid, I remember well,
With pleasing retrospect what you now feel;
And can, on memory's chart, the beauties trace
Of my once blooming, now decrepit, GRACE,
Tottering tho' both with age, yet both uncloy'd
With sweets thro' FIFTY-SEVEN long years enjoy'd.
The rapt'rous flush of youth not fully gone,
But into solid friendship mellow'd down,

Such be my Reverend Grandson's future lot
In brighter life, and line of higher note.
Then let me, thus in low, but friendly, strain,
Express *my* love, and *your* acceptance gain.

Long may you glad recall the happy hour
That join'd you, hand-in-hand to ***** ***
And gave you solace sweet of mortal life!
A young, a lovely, and a virtuous wife,
To share your comforts, and to soothe your fears,
Your joy in youth, your stay in drooping years;
A dear companion thro' the chequer'd path
That leads from marriage to the gate of death:
May you be long in one another blest
With love increasing to adorn the feast,—
The feast of matrimonial joys refin'd
By mutual sympathy of heart and mind,
With soft contentment, and abundance full
Of all that can delight the pious soul!
And may fair branches, in succession, run
From *your* conjunction, as from *ours* have done,
With many a flourishing and fertile shoot,
Springing in order from the parent-root,
Till in decline of years, like mine, you see
Descendents down to third and fourth degree,
Spreading, some more, some less, their leaves abroad,
In ISRAEL's peace, as promis'd by her GOD!

Be this your conjunct state, on earth's vain stage,
Thro' bloom of youth-hood to the frowns of age,
Pleas'd with yourselves, and favourites of Heaven,
Your conduct worthy, and defects forgiven,
Ready, when call'd, together to remove,
By angels led to those blest seats above,
Where all is harmony, and all is love!

Accipe, chare Nepos, tenuis pia vota Camaenae,
Nec sperne obscuri nubile munus Avi.

SONGS.

TULLOCHGORUM.

This, as Burns' says, "the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw" was suggested, during a political dispute, by Mrs Montgomery, at whose house in the village of Ellon, Aberdeenshire, Mr Skinner had been on a visit. It was first printed in the Scots Weekly Magazine for April 1776, a considerable time after the date of its composition.

COME gie's a sang, Montgomery cry'd,
And lay your disputes all aside,
What signifies't for folks to chide
For what was done before them:
Let Whig and Tory all agree,
Whig and Tory, Whig and Tory,
Whig and Tory all agree,
To drop their Whig-mig-morum;
Let Whig and Tory all agree
To spend the night wi' mirth and glee,
And cheerfu' sing alang wi' me
The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

O' Tullochgorum's my delight,
It gars us a' in ane unite,
And ony sumph that keeps a spite,
In conscience I abhor him:
For blyth and cheerie we'll be a',
Blyth and cheerie, blyth and cheerie,
Blyth and cheerie we'll be a',
And mak' a happy quorum;
For blyth and cheerie we'll be a'
As lang as we hae breath to draw,
And dance till we be like to fa'
The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

What needs there be sae great a fraise
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays,
I wadna gie our ain Strathspeys
For half a hunder score o' them;
They're dowf and dowie at the best,
Dowf and dowie, dowf and dowie,
Dowf and dowie at the best,
Wi' a' their variorum;
They're dowf and dowie at the best,
Their *allegros* and a' the rest,
They canna' please a Scottish taste
Compar'd wi' Tullochgorum.

Let warldly worms their minds oppress
Wi fears o' want and double cess,

And sullen sots themsells distress
Wi' keeping up decorum:
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Sour and sulky, sour and sulky,
Sour and sulky shall we sit
Like old philosophorum!
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Wi' neither sense, nor mirth, nor wit,
Nor ever try to shake a fit
To th' Reel o' Tullochgorum?

May choicest blessings aye attend
Each honest, open-hearted friend,
And calm and quiet be his end,
And a' that's good watch o'er him;
May peace and plenty be his lot,
Peace and plenty, peace and plenty,
Peace and plenty be his lot,
And dainties a great store o' them;
May peace and plenty be his lot,
Unstain'd by any vicious spot,
And may he never want a groat,
That's fond o Tullochgorum!

But for the sullen frumpish fool,
That loves to be oppression's tool,
May envy gnaw his rotten soul,
And discontent devour him;

May dool and sorrow be his chance,
Dool and sorrow, dool and sorrow,
Dool and sorrow be his chance,
And nane say, wae's me for him
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
Wi' a' the ills that come frae France,
Wha e'er he be that winna dance
The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

JOHN O' BADENYON.

"This excellent song," says Burns, "is the composition of my worthy friend old Skinner at Linshart."

When first I came to be a man
Of twenty years or so,
I thought myself a handsome youth,
And fain the world would know;
In best attire I stept abroad,
With spirits brisk and gay,
And here and there and every where
Was like a morn in May;
No care I had nor fear of want,
But rambled up and down,
And for a beau I might have past
In country or in town;
I still was pleas'd where'er I went,
And when I was alone,
I tun'd my pipe and pleas'd myself
Wi' John o' Badenyon.

Now in the days of youthful prime
A mistress I must find,
For *love*, I heard, gave one an air
And ev'n improved the mind:

On Phillis fair above the rest
Kind fortune fixt my eyes,
Her piercing beauty struck my heart,
And she became my choice;
To Cupid now with hearty prayer
I offer'd many a vow;
And danc'd and sung, and sigh'd, and swore,
As other lovers do;
But, when at last I breath'd my flame,
I found her cold as stone;
I left the girl, and tun'd my pipe
To John o' Badenyon.

When *love* had thus my heart beguil'd
With foolish hopes and vain;
To *friendship's* port I steer'd my course,
And laugh'd at lovers' pain;
A friend I got by lucky chance,
'Twas something like divine,
An honest friend's a precious gift,
And such a gift was mine;
And now whatever might betide
A happy man was I,
In any strait I knew to whom
I freely might apply;
A strait soon came: my friend I try'd;
He heard, and spurn'd my moan;
I hy'd me home, and tun'd my pipe
To John o' Badenyon.

Methought I should be wiser next
And would a *patriot* turn,
Began to doat on Johnny Wilkes,
And cry up Parson Horne.*
Their manly spirit I admir'd,
And prais'd their noble zeal,
Who had with flaming tongue and pen
Maintain'd the public weel;
But e'er a month or two had past,
I found myself betray'd,
'Twas *self* and *party* after all,
For a' the stir they made;
At last I saw the factious knaves
Insult the very throne,
I curs'd them a', and tun'd my pipe
To John o' Badenyon.

What next to do I mus'd a while,
Still hoping to succeed,
I pitch'd on *books* for company
And gravely try'd to read:
I bought and borrowed every where
And study'd night and day,
Nor mist what dean or doctor wrote
That happen'd in my way;

* This Song was composed when Wilkes, Horne, &c., were making a noise about liberty.

Philosophy I now esteem'd
The ornament of youth,
And carefully through many a page
I hunted after truth.
A thousand various schemes I try'd,
And yet was pleas'd with none,
I threw them by, and tun'd my pipe
To John o' Badenyon.

And now ye youngsters everywhere,
That wish to make a show,
Take heed in time, nor fondly hope
For happiness below;
What you may fancy pleasure here,
Is but an empty name,
And *girls*, and *friends*, and *books*, and so,
You'll find them all the same;
Then be advised and warning take
From such a man as me;
I'm neither Pope nor Cardinal,
Nor one of high degree;
You'll meet displeasure every where;
Then do as I have done,
Ev'n tune your pipe and please yourselves
With John o' Badenyon.

THE EWIE WI' THE CROOKIT HORN.

This song was written to an old Highland reel tune at the request of Dr. Beattie of Aberdeen about the time Mr Skinner occupied the farm of Mains of Ludquharn.

WERE I but able to rehearse
My Ewie's praise in proper verse,
I'd sound it forth as loud and fierce
As ever piper's drone could blaw;
The Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Wha had kent her might hae sworn
Sic a Ewe was never born,
Hereabout nor far awa',
Sic a Ewe was never born,
Hereabout nor far awa',

I never needed tar nor keil
To mark here upo' hip or heel,
Her crookit horn did as weel
To ken her by amo' them a';
She never threaten'd scab nor rot,
But keepit aye her ain jog-trot,
Baith to the fauld and to the cot,
Was never sweir to lead nor caw,
Baith to the fauld and to the cot, &c.

Cauld nor hunger never dang her,
Wind nor wet could never wrang her,
Anes she lay an ouk and langer
Furth aneath a wreath o' snaw
Whan ither Ewies lap the dyke,
And eat the kail for a' the tyke,
My Ewie never play'd the like,
But tyc'd about the barn wa' ;
My Ewie never play'd the like, &c.

A better or a thriftier beast,
Nae honest man could weel hae wist,
For, silly thing, she never mist,
To hae ilk' year a lamb or twa' ;
The first she had I gae to Jock,
To be to him a kind o' stock,
And now the laddie has a flock
O' mair nor thirty head ava' ;
And now the laddie has a flock, &c.

I lookit aye at even' for her,
Lest mishanter shou'd come o'er her,
Or the fowmart might devour her,
Gin the beastie bade awa ;
My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Well deserv'd baith girse and corn,
Sic a Ewe was never born,
Hereabout nor far awa.
Sic a Ewe was never born, &c.

Yet last ouk, for a' my keeping,
(Wha can speak it without greeting?)
A villain cam' when I was sleeping,
Sta' my Ewie, horn and a':
I sought her sair upo' the morn,
An down aneath a buss o' thorn
I got my Ewie's crookit horn,
But my Ewie was awa'.
I got my Ewie's crookit horn, &c.

O! gin I had the loun that did it,
Sworn I have as well as said it,
Tho' a' the warld should forbid it,
I wad gie his neck a thra':
I never met wi' sic a turn,
As this sin ever I was born,
My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Silly Ewie stown awa',
My Ewie wi' the crookit horn, &c.

O! had she died o' crook or cauld,
As Ewies do when they grow auld,
It wad na been, by mony fauld,
Sae sair a heart to nane o's a':
For a' the claith that we hae worn,
Frae her and her's sae aften shorn,
The loss o' her we cou'd hae born,
Had fair strae-death ta'en her awa'.
The loss o' her we cou'd hae born, &c.

But thus, poor thing, to lose her life,
Aneath a bleedy villain's knife,
I'm really fley't that our guidwife
Will never win aboon't ava:
O! a' ye bards benorth Kinghorn,
Call your muses up and mourn,
Our Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Stown frae's, and fellt and a'!
Our Ewie wi' the crookit horn, &c.

THE MARQUIS OF HUNTLY'S REEL.

In mentioning that the "Non-juring Clergyman at Linshart, near Peterhead," composed this Song, Burns adds, "and what is of still more consequence, he is one of the worthiest of mankind." It was written to an air, "The Marquis of Huntly's Reel," by William Marshall, butler to the Duke of Gordon, a distinguished composer of Scottish airs, and also eminent as a violinist.

TUNE your fiddles, tune them sweetly,
Play the Marquis' reel discreetly,
Here we are, a band completely
Fitted to be jolly.—
Come, my boys, blythe and gawcie,
Every youngster chuse his lassie,
Dance wi' life, and be not saucy,
Shy nor melancholy.
Come, my boys, &c.

Lay aside your sour grimaces,
Clouded brows, and drumly faces,
Look about, and see their GRACES,
How they smile delighted;
Now's the season to be merry,
Hang the thoughts of Charon's ferry.
Time enough to turn camsterry
When we're auld and doited.
Now's the season, &c.

Butler, put about the claret,
Thro' us a' divide and share it,
Gordon-Castle well can spare it,
It has claret plenty.
Wine's the true inspiring liquor,
Draffy drink may please the Vicar,
When he grasps the foaming bicker,
Vicars are not dainty.
Wine's the true inspiring liquor, &c.

We'll extoll our noble MASTER,
Sprung from many a brave ancestor,—
Heaven preserve him from disaster,
So we pray in duty.
Prosper, too, our pretty DUCHESS,
Safe from all distressful touches,
Keep her out of Pluto's clutches,
Long in health and beauty.
Prosper, too, our pretty Duchess, &c.

Angels guard their gallant boy,
Make him long his father's joy,
Sturdy, like the heir of Troy,
Stout and brisk and healthy.
Pallas, grant him every blessing,
Wit and strength and size increasing,
Plutus, what's in thy possessing,
Make him rich and wealthy.
Pallas, grant him every blessing, &c.

Youth, solace him with thy pleasure,
In refin'd and worthy measure;
Merit, gain him choicest treasure,
From the Royal donor.
Famous may he be in story,
Full of days, and full of glory,
To the grave, when old and hoary,
May he go with honour!
Famous may he be in story, &c.

Gordons, join our hearty praises,
Honest, though in homely phrases,
Love our cheerful spirits raises,
Lofty as the lark is:
Echo, waft our wishes daily,
Thro' the grove, and thro' the alley,
Sound o'er every hill and valley,
Blessings on our Marquis
Echo, waft our wishes daily, &c.

THE OLD MAN'S SONG.

TUNE—*Dumbarton Drums.*

This song, the author says, in a letter to Burns, "is entirely descriptive of my own sentiments," and the beautiful picture of contentment—the venerable old man with his children and grandchildren around him—was fully realised in his own experience.

O! why should old age so much wound us, O?
There is nothing in it all to confound us, O;
For how happy now am I,
With my old wife sitting by;
And our bairns and our oys all around us, O;
For how happy now am I, &c.

We began in the warld wi' naething, O,
And we've jogg'd on, and toil'd for the ae thing, O;
We made use of what we had,
And our thankful hearts were glad;
When we got the bit meat and the claithing, O,
We made use of what we had, &c.

We have liv'd all our life-time contented, O,
Since the day we became first acquainted, O:
It's true we've been but poor,
And we are so to this hour;
But we never yet repin'd or lamented, O.
It's true we've been but poor, &c.

When we had any stock, we ne'er vauntit, O,
Nor did we hing our heads when we wantit, O;
But we always gave a share
Of the little we could spare,
When it pleas'd a kind Heaven to grant it, O.
But we always gave a share, &c.

We never laid a scheme to be wealthy, O,
By means that were cunning or stealthy, O;
But we always had the bliss,
And what further could we wiss,
To be pleas'd with ourselves, and be healthy, O.
But we always had the bliss, &c.

What tho' we cannot boast of our guineas, O,
We have plenty of Jockies and Jeanies, O;
And these, I'm certain, are
More desirable by far
Than a bag full of poor yellow steinies, O,
And these, I am certain, are, &c.

We have seen many wonder and ferly, O,
Of changes that almost are yearly, O,
Among rich folks up and down,
Both in country and in town,
Who now live but scrimply and barely, O,
Among rich folks up and down, &c.

Then why should people brag of prosperity, O ?
A straiten'd life we see is no rarity, O ;
Indeed we've been in want,
And our living's been but scant,
Yet we never were reduced to need charity, O.
Indeed we've been in want, &c.

In this house we first came together, O,
Where we've long been a father and mither, O ;
And tho' not of stone and lime,
It will last us all our time ;
And, I hope, we shall ne'er need anither, O.
And tho' not of stone and lime, &c.

And when we leave this poor habitation, O,
We'll depart with a good commendation, O ;
We'll go hand in hand, I wiss,
To a better house than this,
To make room for the next generation, O.
We'll go hand in hand, I wiss, &c.
Then why should old age so much wound us, &c.

STILL IN THE WRONG.

To its own Tune.

It has long been my fate to be thought in the *wrong*,
And my fate it continues to be;
The wise and the wealthy still make it their song,
And the clerk and the cottar agree.
There is nothing I do, and there's nothing I say,
But some one or other thinks wrong;
And to please them I find there is no other way,
But do nothing, and still hold my tongue.

Says the free-thinking *Sophist*, "The times are refin'd
In sense to a wondrous degree;
Your old fashion'd faith does but fetter the mind,
And it's *wrong* not to seek to be free."
Says the sage *Politician*, "Your natural share
Of talents would raise you much higher,
Than thus to crawl on in your present low sphere,
And it's *wrong* in you not to aspire."

Says the *Man* of the *World*, "Your dull stoic life
Is surely deserving of blame?
You have children to care for, as well as a wife,
And it's wrong not to lay up for them."
Says the fat *Gormandizer*, "To eat and to drink
Is the true *summum bonum* of man:

Life is nothing without it, whate'er you may think,
And it's *wrong* not to live while you can."

Says the new made *Divine*, "Your old modes we reject,
Nor give ourselves trouble about them:
It is manners and dress that procure us respect,
And it's *wrong* to look for it without them."
Says the grave *peevish Saint*, in a fit of the spleen,
"Ah! me, but your manners are vile:
A parson that's *blythe* is a shame to be seen,
And it's *wrong* in you even to smile."

Says the *Clown*, when I tell him to do what he ought,
"Sir, whatever your character be,
To obey you in this I will never be brought,
And it's *wrong* to be meddling with me."
Says my *Wife*, when she wants this or that for the house,
"Our matters to ruin must go:
Your reading and writing is not worth a souse,
And it's *wrong* to neglect the house so."

Thus *all* judge of me by their taste or their wit,
And I'm censur'd by old and by young,
Who in one point agree, though in others they split,
That in something I'm still in the *wrong*.
But let them say on to the end of the song,
It shall make no impression on me:
If to differ from such be to be in the *wrong*,
In the *wrong* I hope always to be.

LIZZY LIBERTY.

TUNE—*Tibbie Fowler i' the Glen.*

This song was written during the political commotions which agitated Europe shortly after the great French Revolution of 1789.

There lives a lassie i' the braes,
And Lizzy Liberty they ca' her,
Whan she has on her Sunday's claes,
Ye never saw a lady brawer;
So a' the lads are wooing at her,
Courting her but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her!

Her mither ware a tabbit mutch,
Her father was an honest dyker,
She's a black eyed wanton witch,
Ye winna shaw me mony like her,
So a' the lads are wooing at her,
Courting her but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, so mony's wooing at her:

A kindly lass she is, I'm seer,
Has fowth o' sense and smeddum in her,
And nae a swankie far nor near.
But tries wi' a' his might to win her:

They're wooing at her, fain would hae her,
Courting her but eanna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her.

For kindly tho' she be nae doubt,
She manna thole the marriage tether,
But likes to rove and rink about,
Like highland cowt amo' the heather;
Yet a' the lads are wooing at her,
Courting her but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

It's seven year, and some guid mair,
Syn *Dutch Mynheer* made courtship till her,
A merchant bluff and fu' o' care,
Wi chuffy cheeks, and bags o' siller;
So Dutch Mynheer was wooing at her,
Courting her but cudna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, has ow'r mony wooing at her.

Neist to him came *Baltic John*,
Stept up the brae, and leukit at her,
Syne wear his wa wi' heavy moan,
And in a month or twa forgat her;
Baltic John was wooing at her,
Courting her but cudna get her,
Filthy elf she's nae herself, wi' sae mony wooing at her.

Syne after him cam *Yankie Doodle*,
Frae hyne ayont the muckle water;

Tho' Yankie's nae yet worth a boddle,
Wi' might and main he would be at her;
Yankie Doodle's wooing at her,
Courting her, but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

Now *Monkey French* is in a roar,
And swears that nane but he sall hae her,
Tho' he sud wade thro' bluid and gore,
It's nae the king sall keep him frae her:
So Monkey French is wooing at her,
Courting her, but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty has ow'r mony wooing at her.

For France, nor yet her Flanders frien',
Need nae think that she'll come to them;
They've casten aff wi' a' their kin,
And grace and guid have flown fae them:
They're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
Courting her, but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

A stately chiel, they ca' *John Bull*,
Is unco thrang and glaikit wi' her;
And gin he cud get a' his wull,
There's nane can say what he wad gi'e her:

Johnny Bull is wooing at her,
Courting her, but canna get her,
Filthy Ted, she'll never wed, as lang's sae mony's wooing at her.

Even *Irish Teague*, ayont Belfast,
Wadna care to speir about her;
And swears, till he sall breathe his last,
He'll never happy be without her:
Irish Teague is wooing at her,
Courting her, but canna get her,
Bonny Lizzie Liberty has ow'r mony wooing at her.

But *Donald Scot's* the happy lad,
Tho' a' the lave sud try to rate him;
Whan he steps up the brae sae glad
She disna ken maist whare to set him:
Donald Scot is wooing at her,
Courting her, will maybe get her,
Bonny Lizzie Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

Now Donald tak' a frien's advice,
I keen fu' weel ye fain wad hae her,
As ye are happy, sae be wise,
And ha'd ye wi' a smackie frae her:
Ye're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
Courting her, will maybe get her,
Bonny Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her.

Ye're weel, and wat'sna, lad, they're sayin'
Wi' getting leave to dwall aside her ;
And gin ye had her a' your ain,
Ye might nae find it mows to guide her.
Ye're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
Courting her, will maybe get her,
Cunning quean, she's ne'er be mine, as lang's sae mony's
wooing at her.

THE STIPENDLESS PARSON.

TUNE—*A Cobler there was, &c.*

The humble parson whose position, pursuits, and wishes are here so happily sketched was no imaginary character, and of the worthy author himself it may be truly said that "contented he lived and lamented he died."

How happy a life does the parson possess,
Who would be no greater, nor fears to be less;
Who depends on his book and his gown for support,
And derives no preferment from conclave or court,
Derry down, &c.

Without glebe or manse settl'd on him by law,
No stipend to sue for, nor vic'rage to draw;
In discharge of his office he holds him content,
With a croft and a garden, for which he pays rent.
Derry down, &c.

With a neat little cottage and furniture plain,
And a spare room to welcome a friend now and then,
With a good humour'd wife in his fortune to share,
And ease him at all times of family care.
Derry down, &c.

With a few of the Fathers, the oldest and best,
And some modern Extracts pick'd out from the rest,
With a Bible in Latin, and Hebrew, and Greek,
To afford him instruction each day of the week.
Derry down, &c.

With a pony to carry him when he has need,
And a cow to provide him some milk to his bread ;
With a mug of brown ale when he feels himself for't
And a glass of good whisky in place of red port.
Derry down, &c.

What children he has, if any are given,
He thankfully trusts to the kindness of heaven ;
To religion and virtue he trains them while young,
And with such a provision he does them no wrong.
Derry down, &c.

With labour below, and with help from above,
He cares for his *flock*, and is blest with their love :
Tho' his living perhaps in the main may be scant,
He is sure, while, *they* have, that he'll ne'er be in want.
Derry down, &c.

With no worldly projects nor hurries perplext,
He sits in his closet and studies his text ;
And while he converses with Moses or Paul,
He envies not bishop, nor dean in his stall.
Derry down, &c.

Not proud to the poor, nor a slave to the great,
Neither factious in church, nor pragmatic in state,
He keeps himself quiet within his own sphere,
And finds work sufficient in preaching and pray'r.
Derry down, &c.

In what little dealings he's forc'd to transact,
He determines with plainness and candour to act,
And the great point on which his ambition is set,
Is to leave at the last neither riches nor debt.
Derry down, &c.

Thus calmly he steps thro' the valley of life,
Unencumbered with wealth, and a stranger to strife;
On the bustlings around him unmov'd he can look,
And at home always pleas'd with his wife and his book.
Derry down, &c.

And when in old age he drops into the grave,
This humble remembrance he wishes to have;
'By good men respected, by the evil oft tried,
'Contented he liv'd, and lamented he died!
Derry down, &c.

THE MAN OF ROSS.

TUNE—*Miss Ross's Reel.*

When fops and fools together prate,
O'er punch or tea, of this or that,
What silly poor unmeaning chat
Does all their talk engross?
A nobler theme employs my lays,
And thus my honest voice I raise
In well deserved strains to praise
The worthy Man of Ross.

His lofty soul (would it were mine)
Scorns ev'ry selfish low design,
And ne'er was known to repine,
At any earthly loss:
But still contented, frank, and free,
In ev'ry state, whate'er it be,
Serene and stay'd we always see
The worthy Man of Ross.

Let misers hug their worldly store,
And gripe and pinch to make it more;
Their gold and silver's shining ore,
He counts it all but dross:
'Tis better treasure he desires;
A surer stock his passion fires,

And mild benevolence inspires
The worthy Man of Ross.

When want assails the widow's cot,
Or sickness strikes the poor man's hut,
When blasting winds or foggy rot
Augment the farmer's loss:
The sufferer straight knows where to go,
With all his wants and all his woe,
For glad experience leads him to
The worthy Man of Ross.

This man of Ross I'll daily sing,
With vocal note and lyric string,
And duly, when I've drank the king,
He'll be my second toss.
May heaven its choicest blessings send,
On such a man, and such a friend;
And still may all that's good attend
The worthy Man of Ross.

Now if you ask about his name,
And where he lives with such a fame,
Indeed I'll say you are to blame,
For truly *inter nos*,
'Tis what belongs to you and me,
And all of high or low degree,
In every sphere to try to be
The worthy Man of Ross.

A SONG ON THE TIMES.

TUNE—*Broom of the Cowdenknows.*

When I began the world first,
  It was not as 'tis now,
For all was plain and simple then,
  And friends were kind and true:
O! the times, the weary weary times,
  The times that I now see,
I think the world's all gone wrong,
  From what it used to be.

There were not then high capering heads,
  Prick'd up from ear to ear,
And clocks and caps were rarities,
  For gentle folks to wear,
O! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

There's not an upstart mushroom now,
  But what sets up for taste,
And not a lass in all the land,
  But must be lady-drest.
O! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

Our young men married then for love,
  So did our lasses too,

And children lov'd their parents dear,
As children ought to do.
O! the times, the weary weary times, &c

For O! the times are sadly chang'd,
A heavy change indeed!
For truth and friendship are no more,
And honesty is fled.
O! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

There's nothing now prevails but pride,
Among both high and low,
And strife, and greed, and vanity,
Is all that's minded now,
O! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

When I look through the world wide,
How times and fashions go,
It draws the tears from both my eyes,
And fills my heart with woe,
O! the times, the weary weary times,
The times that I now see,
I wish the world were at an end,
For it will not mend for me!

SONG ON THE SCOTCH MILITIA.

TUNE—*Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch.*

Saw ye e'er a lawland lassie
  Happy in her lawland laddie?
I was she sae blythe and gawsie,
  As though I'd ca'd the king my daddie.
My laddie was my heart's delight,
  Kind and canty was my Johnnie,
In liking him had I the wyte,
  Whan a' the warld ca'd him bonnie?

Our bridal day was set, and a' thing
  Ready made to pit's togither,
My tartan plaid, and mony bra' thing
  I gat frae my honest mither.
A short fourteen days, Johnnie sware it,
  Wu'd make me a' his ain for ever,
And right glad was I to hear it,
  We sud now be parted never.

But O! there cam a wearie order,
  About a thing they ca' *militie*;
Ye cam frae hyn ayont the border,
  O! waly fa' the chiel that feish ye!
Cam to tak my Johnnie frae me,
  Left me here to mourn about him,

And till he back again cum to me,
I'll never easy be without him.

Sae ance I thought, till ae lang night,
About my Johnnie I was dreamin,
When i' my sleep I saw him bright,
Wi' mony gentlemen and wimen;
He took my hand afore them a'
And gae me kindly kisses plenty,
A saxpence fyte he brak in twa,
His words were sweet as ony dainty.

"Till my militia days are ended,
Jeanie ye maun wait wi' pleasure,
Whan King and Country I've defended,
Ye shall then be a' my treasure.
Ye shall hear my gallant story,
How I fought in Jeanie's favour;
Fought wi' Frenchmen a' for glory,
And from their cruel claws to save her."

When Scotland's faes are fairly frighten'd,
Never mair to glory o'er her,
Then our hearts will a' be lighten'd
Frae ony fear o' the great devourer.
Sae I'll yield to my country's laws,
And pray for her and Johnnie's honour;
Whan he is fighting in her cause,
May blessings ever light upon her!

THE AULD MINISTER'S SONG

TUNE—"*Auld lang syne.*"

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
Or friendship e'er grow cauld?
Should we nae tighter draw the knot,
Aye as we're growing auld?
How comes it then, my worthy frien',
Who used to be sae kin',
We dinna for each ither speer,
As we did langsyne?

What though I am some aulder grown,
An' ablins nae sae gay;
What though these locks, ance hazel brown,
Are now well mix'd wi' gray:
I'm sure my heart nae caulder grows,
But as my years decline,
Still friendship's flame as warmly glows
As it did langsyne.

Sae well's I min' upo' the days
That we in youthfu' pride
Had used to ramble up the braes
On bonnie Boggie's side.

Nae fairies on the haunted green,
Where moonbeams twinkling shine,
Mair blythely frisk aroun' their queen,
Than we did langsyne.

Sae well's I min' ilk bonny spring
Ye on your harp did play;
An' how we used to dance and sing
The livelang simmer's day.
If ye hae not forgot the art
To strike that harp divine,
Ye'll fin' I still can play my part,
An' sing as auld langsyne.

Though ye live on the banks o' Doun,
And me besooth the Tay,
Ye well might ride to Faukland town
Some bonny simmer's day.
And at that place where Scotland's king
Aft birl'd the beer and wine,
Let's drink, an' dance, an' laugh, an' sing,
An' crack o' auld langsyne.

GLOSSARY.

AITH, oath.
ATHORT, across.
AVA', in whole, at all.

BA'ING, balling, playing at the ball.
BANN, to curse.
BARKIN'D, coated.
BAUK, the cross beam in a barn.
BAULD, bold.
BEFT, threw, beat.
BEGECK, trick, disappointment.
BEIL, home, or shelter.
BELYVE, quickly.
BIN, humour or mood.
BINNER, noise.
BINSOME, quarrelsome.
BIRL, push about,
BIRR, stand upright; also, noise, force.
BIERLY, big.
BLAE, pale.
BLAIZE, blow.
BLUDDER, to cover with blood
BOCKING, vomiting.
BRAW, finely clad.
BRAIN, angry.
BRATTLING, running tumultuously.
BREEKS, trousers.
BROWDIND, was keen for.
BRUILZIE, fighting match.
BUMBEES, wild bees.
BURNS, streams.
BYKE, bee-hive in the earth.

CADGER, a man who drives fish in a cart for sale.
CALLANT, young fellow.
CAMSHACK-KAIR, unlucky concern.
CAMSTERIE, perverse.
CANTIE, cheerful, merry.
CANKART, ill-natured.
CHAFTS, mouth, lower part of the face.
CHAP, stroke.
CLAISE, clothes.
CLAMMY-HOUIT, heavy blow.
CLANK, noise.
COUPING, exchanging.
COUPIT, tumbled.
COUTHY, kind, familiar.
CUIST, cast.
CUNN, owe, give, pay.

DANG, drove.
DAWING, dawning.
DAWRD, push or fling.
DERF, stout.
DOITED, stupid with age.
DOSSD-DOWN, threw themselves down.
DOWF, dull.
DOWIE, sad, spiritless.
DRAFTY, made of malt.

Dree o' wind, a hurricane.
Dreed, suffered.
Drochlin, tottering.
Droukit, drench'd.
Drumly, gloomy, muddy.
Dwabil, loose, weak.

Eemest, uppermost.
Einds, refreshment.

Fantit, fainted.
Fat, what.*
Fawt, fault.
Feish ye, brought ye.
Feil, foolish.
Fell-blate, right foolish.
Fell, pretty much, not a little.
Ferly, something strange.
Fether'd, flew.
Flain, feather.
Fleep, stupid fellow.
Flirr, gnash.
Fleyt, afraid.
Forestam, forehead.
Forrat, forward.
Foumart, polecat.
Fou't be, however it be.
Fouth, plenty.
Fricksome-fraise, vain talking.
Frumpish, ill-humoured.
Frush, frank, forward.
Fu', why.
Fudder, hurry.
Fuilzie, get the better of.
Furth, out of doors.
Fyke, shrugg.
Fykes, troubles.
Fyte, white.

Gab, speak,
Gae, gave.
Gar, make, force.
Gardy, arm.
Gawsie, well-looking.
Gilpy, blockhead.
Girse, grass.
Glaiket, over fond, giddy.
Glawr'd, make slippery.
Glowr'd, looked wistfully.
Gosses, dolts.
Gowf, blow.
Grain, groan.
Greet, to shed tears.
Grunsie, sour fellow.
Gryte, big.
Gullie, large knife.
Gyte, goat.

Hae and Heil, wealth and health.
Haffets, sides of the head.
Harlan, trailing, bringing.
Harnpans, sculls.
Harrum-skairum, light-headed.
Hecht, called.
Heels-o'er-goudie, heels over head.
Heft, dwelt.
Hempy, name of reproach.
Herryt, beggard.
Heez'd, raised up.
Hinch, thigh.
Huilie, wait, slow.
Hyne, far.

Inch, neat.
I wat na fu, I know not how.

* It may not be improper to remark, that in the Aberdeenshire dialect "wh" is uniformly pronounced "f"; as what, "fat"; white, "fite" &c.

Ill-faurd, ugly.
Ill hadden ghaist, ill-mannered visitor.

Jee'd moved.

Kenzies, fighting throng.
Knablick, sharp pointed.

Lap, leaped.
Lave, the rest.
Lawing, shot, tavern bill.
Leit, gave a stroke, or utterance.

Main'd, moaned.
Mank, fail.
Maun, must.
Mawt, malt.
Mawtin'd lolls, heavy clumsy fellows.
Mein them, thank them.
Mensless, without thought.
Mell, fight.
Mird, venture.
Mishanter, misfortune.
Mows, nae mows, not easy.
Meen, moon.
Mutch, a woman's cap.

Nain, own.
Neiper, neighbour.
Nitty, little knave.
Niest, next.
Niz, nose.

Onkent, unknown.
Orra, idle, spare.
Ouk, week.
Outing, abroad.
Oys, grandchildren.

Pawky, witty, good humoured.
Pensy blades, nice looking lads.
Prann, to hurt or bruise.
Pree, taste.
Primpit, delicate.
Puttin-stone, a large round stone used in Scotland in the game called putting or (throwing) the stone.

Queet, ancle.

Raird, roared.
Rammage, rough set.
Rave, tore, to rave, to stretch.
Riftin, hiccuping.
Riggin, the roof.
Raught, reached.
To Rate, to slander.
Rax'd, reached.
Reef, roof.
Rebaghle, reproach.
Red, combed.
Red wud, stark mad.
Rink, run about.
Reeze, to praise.
Reirfu roui, roaring noise.

Sair, very much, sore.
Sark, Shirt.
Sauchin, soft.
Sawt, hot as with salt.
Scawt, scabbed.
Scib, stroke.
Scouf'd hame, went home.
Seil, blessing.
Sin', since.
Skaith, hurt, or loss.
Skance, view.
Skunner, be disgusted.
Skypel skate, ugly fellow.
Slee, sly.
Slip his wa, go his way.
Slype, coarse fellow.

SMEDDUM, cleverness.
SMEERLESS, simple.
SNACK, fit for the purpose.
SNAP, ready, clever.
SNEESHIN, snuff.
SNIBE, a small blow.
SNYPE, smart blow.
SOWF, stroke.
SOWME, the chain connecting the oxen in a plough.
SPAWL, leg.
SQUEELED, squale'd.
STA, stole.
STAFFY-NIVED, cudgelling.
STAIG, a young horse.
STALWART, strong, stout.
STEEK, shut.
STEER MY STURDY, trouble my head.
STENN, to spring or jump.
STOIT, stumble.
STOWEN, stolen.
STRAE-DEATH, a natural death.
STRENZEED, sprained.
STRYNE, turn of mind.
STYME, the least glimpse.
SUMPH, a soft stupid fellow.
SUTOR, a shoemaker.
SWANKIES, clever lads.
SWEIR, slow, backward.
SWITHER, doubt, perplexity.
SWYPE, stroke.
SYKE, bog.
SYPE, run out.

TED, toad.
TENT, care.
THEATS, traces by which the horses draw.
THOLE, bear.
THRANG, busy.
THRA, twist.
THUD, stroke.
TINT, lost.
TIRR, uncover.
TOD-LOWRIE, a fox.
TRYPAL, ill made fellow.
TUILZIE, struggle.
TWEEL, texture.
TYC'D ABOUT, went slowly about.

UNCANNY, dangerous.

VIRR, force, fury.

WALLY FA, woe be to.
WEEL WYLED WAP, well chosen stroke.
WEEL BEFT, weel beaten.
WHAM, a blow.
WHAT-RAIKS! what do you deserve!
WHITTY-WHAUS, silly pretences.
WOW, an exclamation of pleasure, or wonder.
WREATH O' SNAW, drift, or heap of snow.
WYLE, to choose.
WYTE, fault.
WUD, mad.

YAP, forward.
YARK, hard stroke.
YAWFU, awful.
YIRD, earth.
YIRDLINS, earthwards.
YOWFF'D, drave.
YOWL, yell.

THE END.

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